

MIND PALACE

How to Memorize
& Surmise Like
Sherlock Holmes



BRAIN ATHLETE

Ron White

World Leading Memory Expert



Mind Palace:

How to Memorize
& Surmise Like Sherlock

by
Ron White

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Forward

The character of Sherlock Holmes has been repeated in different forms, but with the same characteristics, over many genres – television, books, movies, and social clubs. It is as if the character were real, and people are fascinated with how his mind works.

The draw of Sherlock Holmes is not just because people are interested in intrigue and detective stories. They want to actually learn to THINK like Sherlock Holmes. They want to test their intelligence against the master. Is it possible to solve a crime quicker than Sherlock Holmes? Is he always right? How is he able to spot all those clues others miss so quickly?

People have formed clubs around the character, the most famous being the Baker Street Irregulars, founded in 1934 by Christopher Morley. With these gatherings, people from all parts of the world meet – in person, or on social media, to re-enact a crime and try to see who can solve the mystery first. They exchange written works on Holmes, mysteries, clues, and even fan-inspired trading cards.

Often people want to see if they are smarter than Sherlock Holmes, and if they possess the ability to recall minute details that can help them form an educated resolution to a problem. They want to understand how Holmes thinks. Is he a genius, or does he come to his conclusions as anyone else would who takes the time to focus, and observe?

My name is Ron White and I am a two-time USA Memory Champion. I have held the record for the fastest person to memorize a deck of cards in the USA, and for the most numbers memorized in 5 minutes - at 167 digits. I promise you that you can do these things with practice, and I want to help you learn how to do just that.

I have been a memory training expert for many years. I have done videos where I can recall the names of almost everyone in an audience, and have

conducted seminars around the world on how to improve memory to enrich all aspects of your life, including your job. Memory, and memory improvement, is not only a job for me, it's a passion.

I enjoy watching people's faces as I have the audience members stand up, and one by one I will point to them and recall their names so they can sit down.

Many think I have a photographic memory, but that is not the case. I was born with a normal brain and memory, just like most people. What is different for me is that I have trained myself to memorize long lists, names and locations. Most of the time I use the Method of Loci, or as Holmes calls it - the Memory Palace, an ancient technique that allows you to recall information based on associating the information with a specific location, and anyone can do it.

I want to explain to you what memory is, and the different types of memory we use to make decisions and come to conclusions. I want to teach you EXACTLY how Sherlock Holmes' brain works to spot details, organize, dismiss, and focus on what most people overlook. I want to teach you how you can use your memory to store and recall facts so they are at your disposal whenever you need them.

In essence, I want to teach you how you too can think like Sherlock Holmes by using his mind palace, and fine tuning his memory techniques and tools.

I put together this book to teach you how to see the world as Sherlock Holmes would, and to help you see that you too can be brilliant at remembering details. I want to show you that learning to think like Holmes can help you in your daily life.

This book is part of a larger program that can be found at sherlockskills.com. The program enables you to memorize names and faces; memorize chapters of books; learn foreign languages; give speeches without notes; memorize Bible verses; or whatever you want. So I really recommend that you check it out.

Who knows, you could become a brilliant detective like Sherlock Holmes. If not a detective, at least you have the tools to develop your mind and memory to think like the brilliant investigator.

I look forward to following you in your journey to think like Sherlock Holmes, and I look forward to feedback on your progress.

- Ron White

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Chapter 1

The Magnetism of Sherlock Holmes

If you are like me, you are a fan of Sherlock Holmes. We have read the books, and seen the movies and television shows where he outsmarts his nemesis and other trained detectives by focusing in on small but important details that escape others.

There is something about this intellectual detective that is magnetic. We are drawn in by his astute logical reasoning, his ability to adopt almost any disguise, and his use of forensic science to solve difficult cases - even before the introduction of modern DNA testing and computers. We respect him, admire him, and want to think like him.

What is it about Sherlock Holmes that draws us to him? How is he able to spot things that other trained professionals have missed? Does he have a photographic(eidetic) memory, or is it something any of us can learn? These are questions Sherlock Holmes aficionados would like answers to, and what I wish to address throughout this book.

The great English ghost story writer, Montague Rhodes James, once said the adventures of Sherlock Holmes differed from his ghost writing in that his stories did not frighten people as long as they were long ago and far away, while Doyle's stories brought them to the "here and now."

The Sherlock Holmes stories originated in Victorian England, yet the tales have universal appeal, and have withstood time. As a matter of fact, the appeal seems to be escalating, with more and more entertainment involving a main character with Holmes' amazing memory and observation abilities – i.e. *The Mentalist*, *Forever*, *Elementary*, etc. Every crime story with a wise detective incorporates some of the methods of Sherlock Holmes. When you get to know Holmes better you can easily spot these elements and see the similarities.

We like the appeal of an adventure, and we also enjoy the intrigue of a riddle. It's only human nature to be curious, and competitive. We want to

see if we can outsmart those who are “trained experts,” and most of us want to see the criminals get caught. The more cocky, creative and intelligent the criminal is the more exciting and intriguing the case becomes, until the conclusion is reached.

People always are curious. We want to know what happened when a crime was committed. We want details. We want to come to our own conclusions before anyone else to see how smart we are, and if can solve the crime before the experts do.

In addition, solving a crime brings us a sense of safety in an ever growing unsafe world. We want to bring order from chaos. Even if the world around us is crumbling, and the story is fictitious, we can escape to a place where order is restored, and Sherlock Holmes brings that order.

Even though Sherlock Holmes is brilliant, he is a flawed person, which makes him vulnerable and human. We can relate to him on many levels, so we excuse his flaws (heroin addition and arrogance) because he is able to make the world a better and safer place. He makes mistakes, but admits to them and moves on – using what he learned from his mistakes to help him further along in the investigation.

The appeal of Doyle’s stories first came about because the backdrop was in London, and a familiar place to his initial readers. They could picture the streets, back alleys and buildings. This allowed them to become a part of the story, even if they were not characters. When you envision something you are better able to imagine it – and as you will see in later chapters, this improves your memory.

Another aspect of his appeal is that Holmes is not part of the bureaucracy. He is an amateur in their eyes, and just one of them. He has an ingrained sense of law and order, justice, and right from wrong – almost a righteous indignation against someone who has the gall to run afoul of what is right and proper. He disregards the opinions of others he feels are not thorough in their pursuit of the truth, but would rather solve a case quickly – and often incorrectly.

Writer A.A. Milne wrote in the preface to his mystery novel, *The Red House Mystery*: “For the detective himself I demand that he be an amateur. In real life, no doubt, the best detectives are the professional police, but then in real life the best criminals are professional criminals. In the best detective stories the villain is an amateur, one of ourselves: we rub shoulders with him It is the amateur detective alone who can expose the guilty man.... For this is what we really come to: that the detective must have no more special knowledge than the average reader. The reader must be made to feel that, if he too had used the light of cool inductive reasoning, and the logic of stern remorseless facts (as, Heaven bless us, we are quite capable of doing) then he too would have fixed the guilt.”

One would think Milne was speaking of Sherlock Holmes.

Chapter 1 Exercise

Since this is a book about not only Sherlock Holmes, but memory, let's start out with a simple memory test. Take out a paper and pen and jot down YES or NO to the following questions (unless indicated otherwise). Note that this is not an exact memory test, but simply a way to see how good your memory is. If you receive a low score on this, it could indicate you may have some problems due to poor health or eating habits, but you should see a specialist who can run more precise tests. To see how well you did, and how to score this exercise, refer to Chapter 17 on page 68.

Simple Memory Test:

1. Remember these words: banana, camera, rabbit (do not write this down yet)
2. Remember this name and address: Sally Jones, 2724 Kentucky, Amarillo, Texas (do not write this down yet)
3. Have you had trouble remembering things you have done the last few weeks?
4. Do you have a difficult time remembering lists?
5. Do you find yourself having a harder time doing simple math, like tallying a 10% tip at a restaurant?
6. Have you had trouble paying your bills on time because you forget them?
7. Do the names of people you see all the time escape you?
8. Are you having trouble recognizing people you should know?
9. Do you have trouble retrieving words you should know?
10. Are simple tasks, like turning on the oven or working a blender, difficult?

11. Have you been having memory lapses at work that interfere with your ability to do your job?
12. Are you having trouble functioning at home?
13. Do you shrink from social situations because you can't remember people?
14. Name the last five Presidents of the United States.
15. Name the past three Vice-Presidents.
16. What main dishes did you eat for dinner the last two nights?
17. Can you describe the last two movies you saw?
18. Write down the three words you were asked to remember at the beginning of the quiz.
19. Write down the name and address you were asked to remember at the beginning of the quiz.
20. What is the name of this book?

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Chapter 2

Arthur Conan Doyle and the Development of Sherlock Holmes

Arthur Ignatious Conan Doyle, the creator of Sherlock Holmes, was born May 22, 1859 in Edinburgh, Scotland, to Charles Altamont Doyle and Mary Foley Doyle. They were affluent and strict Irish-Catholics. His father was a Victorian artist, but never became as successful in his art as his own father, John Doyle, or his brother, Richard Doyle. His lack of success with his art led him to depression and alcoholism.

As Arthur grew, he spent his early childhood listening to his mother telling him brilliantly animated and captivating tales that held his attention, and sparked his imagination.

When he turned 9, Arthur was sent off to Hodder Place, a Jesuit boarding school in Stonyhurst, England. Here he retreated into a world of characters and stories to escape the corporal punishment by the educators, and bullying by the other students. In time, his ability to spin a story drew a following of younger students eager to listen spellbound to his tales.



Sir Arthur Conan Doyle

When he graduated from Stonyhurst College in 1876, Doyle's family expected him to come back to the family business in the art world. Instead he decided to pursue a career in medicine at the University of Edinburgh Medical School. It was there he met fellow classmates and future authors, Robert Louis Stevenson and James Barrie. He also was introduced to his future mentor - Dr. Joseph Bell, a surgeon at the Royal Infirmary of Edinburgh, for whom Doyle later worked as a clerk. Bell, with his shrewd perception, and sharp attention to detail, was the strongest inspiration for the Sherlock Holmes character.

Doyle wrote his first short story, *The Mystery of Sasassa Valley*, while in medical school. His second story, *The American Tale*, was printed in the *London Society* publication. While in his third year of medical school, Doyle took a job on a whaling ship traveling around the Arctic Circle. This voyage stirred his sense of adventure, and brought about the inspiration for his next story, *Captain of the Pole Star*.

Doyle returned to medical school in 1880, and graduated in 1881. His first paying job as a doctor was aboard the steamship *Mayumba*, which traveled from Liverpool to Africa.

After a while he opened his first medical practice in Portsmouth, England, dividing his time between medicine and writing. After a few years, Doyle gave up his medical practice and devoted all his time to writing.

It was during his final years in medical school, and as a physician, that Doyle renounced his Roman Catholic faith and turned toward Spiritualism. He alluded to this new-found religion in many of his writings.

The Sherlock Holmes and Dr. Watson characters were presented in his first novel, originally named *A Tangled Skein*, and later renamed *A Study in Scarlet*. At first his publishers, Ward and Locke, looked at it as just another “cheap fiction” book similar to what was flooding the market at the time. In 1887 they featured the work in *Beeton’s Christmas Annual*. Doyle used some of his father’s art as illustrations in the book.

That same year, Doyle submitted two letters detailing his conversion to Spiritualism to a weekly paper called *Light*. His faith would be repeated as the topic in three later books, *Beyond the City* (1893), *The Stark Munro Letters* (1895) and *A Duet with an Occasional Chorus* (1899). In addition, he worked on spreading the word of Spiritualism through a series of works - *The New Revolution* (1918); *The Vital Message* (1919); *The Wanderings of a Spiritualist* (1921); and *History of Spiritualism* (1926). Experts considered these pieces to be, for the most part, autobiographical.

Doyle dream was to write historical books, and was able to fit these in among his other writing, although they did not pay enough to devote his

full time to writing them. His published historical books included *The Great Shadow* (1892), that centered on the Napoleonic Era; and his most famous historical novel, *Rodney Stone* (1896).

His career was starting to take off, and he was getting more and more paid commissions for his work. An American publisher authorized the penning of a work of Doyle's titled *The Sign of Four*, featuring the Sherlock Holmes character, while the newly published *Strand Magazine* wetted the appetites of readers with short stories about Holmes. These works would later become a collection of 56 stories, and four novels, titled *The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes*. All but four of these works were narrated by Holmes' friend and biographer, Dr. John H. Watson.

Doyle penned the stories for *Strand Magazine* in a series of six installments. By the end of the second series, Doyle felt he wanted to move on to more "serious" writing (his historical novels), and had gotten weary of the Holmes character, so he killed him off in a physical fight with his nemesis, Professor Moriarty, at Reichenbach Falls.

The killing off of the character produced such an outpouring of anger from his fans, including his mother, that he was forced to resurrect him as a ghost in *The Hounds of the Baskervilles*, and as a fully revived man in *The Adventures of the Empty House*. The character had become so lucrative to him that he couldn't abandon him, and besides, it was financing his missionary work on behalf of Spiritualism.

While Doyle was still struggling to make a name for himself as an author, he met and married his first wife, Louisa Hawkins. The couple had two children – a boy and a girl.

In 1893, Louise was stricken with tuberculosis. She died in his arms in 1906. The following year Doyle married Jean Leckie, and they had two sons and a daughter.

Arthur Conan Doyle's last 12 stories about the great detective were published in 1928 in *The Casebook of Sherlock Holmes*. Doyle, against the advice of his doctors after he had been diagnosed with angina pectoris,

conducted a missionary tour of the Netherlands in the fall of 1929. He returned to his home in Crowborough, England, where he died in his garden on July 7, 1930.

Chapter 2 Exercise

Without going back through the last chapter, can you recall these facts?

1. What was Doyle's full name?
2. What was his father's middle name?
3. What boarding school did Doyle attend?
4. From what medical school did Holmes graduate?
5. In what book were the characters of Holmes and Watson introduced?
6. What is Watson's first name?
7. What was the name of the place Doyle first killed Holmes off?
8. What was the name of the steamship Doyle took his first job on after graduation from medical school?
9. What religion did Doyle take up when he renounced Catholicism?
10. Who was Doyle's greatest mentor, and the basis for the Holmes character?

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Chapter 3

The Influences of Doyle's Characters

It is widely known that Doyle based his Holmes character on Dr. Joseph Bell, his mentor and medical instructor. When Rudyard Kipling, the prize-winning author of many books and poems, including *The Jungle Book*, read Doyle's first book he sent a congratulatory letter to Doyle and remarked, "Isn't he my old friend, Dr. Joe?"

Even Doyle's former classmate, Robert Louis Stevenson, remarked about the similarities of the doctor and the character. Bell had a beak-like nose, and a strange manner of walking due to a case of diphtheria he caught from a patient. Holmes' wardrobe - right down to his well-known long, caped coat; signature deerstalker hat; curly pipe; and walking stick - were based on Bell.

Doyle admitted: "I thought of my old teacher Joe Bell, of his eagle face, of his curious ways, and his eerie trick of spotting details." (Note: Although Doyle took many of Bell's attributes as the Sherlock Holmes character, he did not copy him exactly. Bell was married, never used cocaine, was not a tidy person, and had a good sense of humor.)

Like Holmes, Bell was noted for drawing broad conclusions from minute observations. The author once wrote to Bell, "It is certainly to you that I owe Sherlock Holmes...I do not think that his analytical work is in the least an exaggeration of some effect which I have seen you produce in the out-patient ward." Doyle was referring to Bell's ability to tell the background of a patient without even looking at their chart, or having past knowledge of them.

As an example, Doyle said he once saw Bell correctly state that a patient was a non-commissioned officer who had recently been discharged from the Highland Regiment stationed in Barbados. He was also known to tell if a person was a drinker or not by just looking at their face.

Bell would later write to Doyle, “You are yourself Sherlock Holmes, and well you know it.”

The Sherlock Holmes anthologies are full of cases of Bell’s methods, for example, *In The Red-Headed League*, Holmes profiles a new client: “Beyond the obvious facts that he has at some time done manual labour, that he takes snuff, that he is a Freemason, that he has been in China, and that he has done a considerable amount of writing lately, I can deduce nothing else.”

Bell learned how to become so observant through his training at the Edinburgh Medical School. This attention to detail, power of observation, and deductive reasoning, was carried over into all aspects of his life, and he urged his students to do the same. As he explained: “Most men have a head, two arms, a nose, a mouth and a certain number of teeth. It is the little differences (the ‘trifles’) such as the droop of an eyelid, which differentiates man.” He would often tell his students, “Use your eyes. Use your eyes.”

Dr. Joseph Bell took part in many criminal investigations as a consultant for the police and Scotland Yard. One of particular note was the case of Jack the Ripper. In 1888, Bell participated in the investigation of this known serial killer, studying the Ripper’s handwriting and other details. He even drew a conclusion as to the identity of the slayer, but it was never made public, and his notes have not been found.

Bell would stay awake for days trying to get to the bottom of a case – either in medicine or in crime solving. During this time he would not eat, which is why the character is very thin. He became obsessed with finding the root of the problem, and based his conclusions on logic and reason.

Bell also had a flair for the dramatic. He liked to use the element of surprise when coming forth with a deduction, and then would go about to explain it in layman’s terms so it appeared to be a simple conclusion what other’s could have come by if they really thought about it. Bell and Holmes both think others are not as smart as they because they can’t see the answer that

had been right in front of them all the time. As Sherlock Holmes once said, “Every problem becomes very childish when once it is explained.”

Although Bell was the main inspiration, there were others who influenced Holmes’ characteristics. From Sir Henry Littlejohn, Doyle learned the art of taking pictures and analyzing fingerprints. Sir Robert Christison, a professor and chemist, also known as the “master of poisons,” shows his influence when Holmes experiments with smells and potions. It was said that as Christison was experimenting he would test some of his creations on himself. Holmes is known to be so impatient that he would test specimens instead of waiting for a police lab report to come back.

The character of Dr. Watson was named and modeled after a likeable surgeon named Dr. Patrick Heron Watson. The real Watson was a veteran of the Crimean War (the character of Watson was a veteran of the Afghanistan War).

It was no secret that Doyle used Stonyhurst College as the setting for many of his stories. It was also known there were two boys attending school at the same time as Doyle with the last name of Moriarty. Is it a coincidence that Doyle named his arch nemesis by that name? According to Holmes, there is no such a thing as coincidence. You recall that Doyle used his stories to escape bullying by other students at school. Could it be these boys were part of those who did the bullying? It would make sense then that he would associate negativity with that name, thus the character of the evil Professor James Moriarty.

The criminal mastermind, and Sherlock Holmes’ most famous nemesis, Moriarty, has been described as the “Napoleon of crime,” a term Doyle took from a Scotland Yard inspector’s description of a real-life criminal, Adam Worth.

Holmes described Moriarty as follows in *The Adventure of the Final Problem*: “He is a man of good birth and excellent education, endowed by nature with a phenomenal mathematical faculty. At the age of twenty-one he wrote which has had a European vogue. On the strength of it, he won the

mathematical at one of our smaller universities, and had, to all appearances, a most brilliant career before him. But the man had hereditary tendencies of the most diabolical kind. A criminal strain ran in his blood, which, instead of being modified, was increased and rendered infinitely more dangerous by his extraordinary mental powers. Dark rumours gathered round him in the University town, and eventually he was compelled to resign his chair and come down to London. He is the Napoleon of crime, Watson. He is the organiser of half that is evil and of nearly all that is undetected in this great city...”

Moriarty was introduced primarily to allow Holmes to be killed off. The death of both characters took place at Reichenbach Falls in *The Adventure of the Final Problem*. Holmes believed many of his cases were not isolated incidents, but part of a criminal organization headed by Moriarty. Moriarty appeared in one more story by Doyle, *The Valley of Fear*, but he did not rise from the dead, as Holmes did. *The Valley of Fear* was written before *The Adventure of the Final Problem*, but was published afterward. The nemesis was alluded to in several other stories thereafter, but there was no direct contact between the characters.

The real criminal mastermind, Adam Worth, was suspected of stealing a painting by Jean-Baptiste Greuze, but the authorities were unable to prove it. Doyle described that same painting hanging on the wall in *The Valley of Fear*.

Moriarty, Holmes and his brother Mycroft were given a “high, domed forehead,” because in those times this type of head shape indicated an extremely intelligent person.

The character of Moriarty was also thought to be drawn from American astronomer Simon Newcomb, a genius who was a master of mathematics, and famous during the time of Doyle’s writing. He was a particularly sinister man, notorious for taking delight in destroying the reputation and careers of other scientists.

Surviving Jesuit priests who had taught at Stonyhurst College noted the physical traits of Moriarty as being those of the Prefect of Discipline at the time Doyle attended the school, Rev. Thomas Kay. He was a stern disciplinarian, and Doyle had many encounters as a boy with him.

Many also believed that Doyle used Scotland Yard's Inspector Alec MacDonald's description of London's arch-criminal in *The Valley of Fear* based on Father Kay. MacDonald described Moriarty this way: "He'd have made a grand meenister with his thin face and grey hair and his solemn-like way of talking."

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Chapter 4

The Beginning of Forensic Evidence

Holmes is almost superhuman in his ability to make observations that others have missed. His capabilities go beyond simply looking at the crime scene. He takes in everything, and seldom mistakes or overlooks a sign. How is he able to do that when he doesn't have the forensic tools investigators have today?

For him, the enormous amount of data he absorbs within minutes is almost an afterthought. He does it with such seamless ease he doesn't even consciously know he is doing it – like second nature. He is constantly on the lookout, and has taken investigation to an art form.

What most of us would overlook as unimportant, or simply not see altogether, he has processed through all of his senses and either discarded as unimportant, or put to memory as a clue to be checked out. The point is, he didn't overlook anything, but is quickly able to discard what he thinks is unimportant.

Holmes often advised Watson to go beyond the *seeing*, and into the realm of *observing*. An example of Holmes showing Watson the difference is found in this exchange in *A Scandal in Bohemia*:

“When I hear you give your reasons,” Watson remarked, “the thing always appears to me to be so ridiculously simple that I could easily do it myself, though at each successive instance of your reasoning, I am baffled until you explain your process. And yet I believe that my eyes are as good as yours.”

“Quite so,” Holmes answered, lighting a cigarette, and throwing himself down into an armchair. “You see, but you do not observe. The distinction is clear. For example, you have frequently seen the steps which lead up from the hall to this room.”

“Frequently,” says Watson.

“How often?” asks Holmes.

“Well, some hundreds of times.”

“Then how many are there?”

“How many? I don't know.”

“Quite so! You have not observed. And yet you have seen. That is just my point. Now, I know that there are seventeen steps, because I have both seen and observed.”

Notice what's around you and how it would affect you or what you are working on. Although you may never enter the expert realm of Sherlock Holmes as far as investigation, you will definitely see a difference in how you make decisions. Being mindful of your surroundings can make an enormous difference in how you see the world.

In Holmes' era forensics was in its infancy. He was way ahead of his time with his ability to analyze fingerprints, footprints, blood patterns, and the importance of smell. According to his housekeeper, Mrs. Hudson, Holmes conducted “malodorous experiments” in his rooms by taking a cadaver to see how bruises would look after death; or he would “transfix a pig” with a single blow in order to observe how the blood spatters if the pig is hit in a certain way.

Police were not as careful about preserving evidence as they are now. In his day it was not uncommon for a crime scene to be trampled to the point of ruining all the evidence before it is gathered. As Holmes stated in *The Boscombe Valley Mystery*, “Oh, how simple it would all have been had I been here before they came like a herd of buffalo and wallowed all over it.”

After gathering as much evidence as possible from the crime scene itself, Holmes would continue his investigation by speaking to witnesses he felt important, researching the background of the victim and suspects, and gathering as much information from as many resources as he thought necessary. He had weight-bowed bookshelves of research and documents that he compiled while working on a case.

Expert at non-verbal communication

Holmes was astute at recognizing deception, but he was not above deception of his own in order to get his information. He seemed to delight in his ability to disguise himself and role-play a part in order to track down a suspect or obtain information. He drew upon his “theatrical training” to disguise himself and learn how the criminal mind worked. His thinking was, you have to think like a criminal in order to catch a criminal.

His range was vast – from an old Arab in *The Curse Of Nectanebo*, to a Baptist preacher in *The Adventure of the Child's Perambulator*. Remarkably, he would often disguise himself as a woman. Since the backdrop for Doyle's stories were set in Victorian times, it was easy to appear in public with a black veil over his face, as a woman in mourning, to conceal his identity. He would study his subjects by using an older woman disguise to reassure them, or to allow Holmes to enter into places that men were not usually allowed. Who would have thought a gentle woman would be a male detective? This disguise also protected him from unwanted attention as he observed criminal behavior.

In order to pass himself off in these roles he actually had to know something about the background of these characters, and adapt his appearance, speech and mannerisms to that of his role. What was so amazing to followers was his ability to take on a role instantaneously, and he was able to deceive even his closest friends.

Through his ability to don disguises, and to seamlessly become another believable character, he was able to recognize others who were doing the same. It was nearly impossible to hoodwink Holmes, because he had trained himself to do just the same.

Britons, especially in Victorian times, are very adept at recognizing different dialects, and could often tell you what part of the UK a person was from. Accents, slangs, phrases and jargon told them where the person came from, as well as what economical class they were in. The fact that Holmes could understand and imitate them was a testimony to his ability to

observe and store this information in his memory files. It is not a trait we are born with, but one we can learn and fine tune over time - and with practice.

In order to learn these traits he had to mingle with the people, and become one of them. It is probably that, on his many walks to clear his mind, he took on a character that would allow him to associate with those around him. Even so, it had to take many years of research to be able to do it so well. As Watson once said in *A Study in Scarlet*, “Sometimes he spent his day at the chemical laboratory, sometimes in the dissecting room, and occasionally in long walks, which appeared to take him into the lowest portions of the city.” (Note: Holmes used Doyle’s father’s middle name, ‘Altamont’ as his undercover name in the book, *His Last Bow*.)

We see these methods used today on television shows that rely on forensic methods to solve cases. Imagine what Holmes could do today with computers, face and voice recognition software, lasers and social media! He would be in seventh-heaven with all the information he could get his hands on in a short period of time. Or would he?

Can Computers Reprress the Storage of Memory?

Researchers are reporting that the widespread use of search engines and online databases affect the way people remember information.

Scientists from Columbia, Harvard and the University of Wisconsin collaborated to find out if people were more likely to remember information they could easily get off the Internet - similar to students who are more likely to only remember information they believe will be on a test, as opposed to studying their notes and textbooks.

Different memory experiments were conducted.

- Participants typed 40 bits of trivia into a computer. Half of the subjects believed the information would be saved to the computer. The other half believed the data would be erased. Those who believed the information would be deleted were significantly more likely to remember the information than those who believed the information had been saved. “Participants did not make the effort to remember when they thought they could later look up the trivia statement they had read,” the authors write.

The purpose of this experiment was to determine if access to computers affects what we remember. “If asked the question as to whether there are any countries with only one color in their flag, for example,” the researchers wrote, “do we think about flags — or immediately think to go online to find out?”

- Here, the subjects were asked to remember both the trivia statement itself, and which one of five files it was saved to on the computer. The results indicated that people were more apt to remember where the file folder was located than the information.

“That kind of blew my mind,” Betsy Sparrow, lead researcher on the project and professor of psychology at Columbia said in an interview. This portion of the study explored transactive memory, where people tend to rely on other sources, like family or friends - or in this case a computer, to store their information as opposed to remembering it themselves. “I love watching baseball,” Dr. Sparrow said. “But I know my husband knows baseball facts, so when I want to know something I ask him, and I don’t bother to remember it.”

“Human memory,” she said, “is adapting to new communications technology.” Although the Internet’s effects on our memory are still unexplored, for the most part, Dr. Sparrow and her team believe that it has “become our primary external storage system.”

“Since the advent of search engines, we are reorganizing the way we remember things...Our brains rely on the internet for memory in much the

same way they rely on the memory of a friend, family member or co-worker. We remember less through knowing information itself than by knowing where the information can be found,” says Dr. Sparrow.

Dr. Tracy Alloway, from Stirling University, speaking in September of 2012 at the British Science Festival, stated that Twitter “produces a stream of information every second with no opportunity to process or manipulate that information.”

He also took a shot at YouTube, saying that it “reduces the attention span, stops the brain engaging,” and can cause children viewing these clips to be diagnosed with attention deficit disorder. He did have positive remarks to make about Facebook, however, saying “The website allows people to feel more a part of a community – something lacking in society overall today.

Dr. Alloway may not be too far from the truth in one aspect, we are using the Internet as a crutch for finding and retrieving information, but there are other aspects of the Internet that expands our brains – such as access to brain games and information we are unable to get from our local library.

When Holmes went about solving a case he relied on past experience; clues that he observed on that particular case; and outside sources. In other words, he used his ability to bring forth memories that are relevant; his ability to focus on what he found at the crime scene through fine-tuned observation; and what he gathered from witnesses and police, as well as his mountains of research books, during the course of the investigation.

Is it possible that use of present day computers could impact Sherlock Holmes’ memory and way of analyzing information? It is highly doubtful, since Holmes’ memory is almost as quick, and concise, as a computer. I could see him using it for research, but only as another tool in his arsenal.

Ironically, this type of thinking is not new, or original. Way back in the fourth century BC, Plato wrote in *The Phaedrus*, that WRITING could cause memory problems. He wrote: Those who acquire it (learn to read and write) will cease to exercise their memory and become forgetful; they will rely on writing to bring things to their remembrance by external signs

instead of by their own internal resources. What you have discovered is a recipe for recollection, not for memory.”

Imagination

Sherlock Holmes has an exceptional and creative imagination. Even though he may be proven wrong - and that did happen on occasion, he was able to envision different possibilities and scenarios. Looking at as his failures as lessons, he did not dwell on them, but used them to his advantage to find another path.

His imagination was aided by the use of his “memory palace,” which was used to store all information that would eventually be helpful to solving crimes. He is adept at pulling just the right information from his “brain attic” for that particular case, and is able to eliminate what is not necessary – although other information is stored there as well. One famous example is that of him claiming he was not familiar with the latest scientific theories, when in fact he was, but they were not relevant to that particular case.

Holmes looked at different scenarios in an object manner, and avoided many of the biases that can cause others to come to a different, and erroneous, conclusion. He once said, “When you have eliminated all which is impossible, then whatever remains, however improbable, must be the truth.”

Know the Basics

Holmes once called deduction “systematised common sense.” Many would argue that he makes “educated guesses” based on logical thinking - moving from objective observation to hypothesis based on the evidence in order to form a conclusion. When he is proven wrong he looks for new information he may have overlooked, re-evaluates the data he has compiled, and forms another “educated guess.” Through the process of elimination, he eventually comes to the correct conclusion.

Maria Konnikova, in her book *Mastermind*, brilliantly lays out Holmes' process for deductive reasoning. The mainstay of Holmes' process is observation, and insights into the human mind, memory and imagination. Everything starts with the basics – the groundwork, and moves from there. Holmes approaches everything from what he calls “elementary” point of view.

Every problem has a solution, and every solution starts with the basics, working from the ground up. You can't form a conclusion until you have information, and you can't get information unless you observe and take in what is in front of you. This knowledge base comes from years of building the proper foundation, and in Holmes' case it meant building his memory attic, or mind palace.

According to Konnikova, these five elements form the basis for Holmes' deduction ability:

1. Know yourself
2. Observe carefully
3. Imagine
4. Deduce
5. Learn

You are the only one who can know your strengths and weaknesses. You know when you are losing your ability to focus; you know when you look at someone and form an opinion without ever speaking to them. You are the only one who can control your surroundings, and you should know your strengths and weaknesses.

With the constant demand for your attention – emails, text, cell phones, social media, etc. we often lose our train of thought, and we often take the “road of least resistance” when it comes to focusing our attention.

We tend to see things subjectively, not objectively, and form our opinions on someone or something based on prior knowledge, and what we have

stored in our memories. This does not make for a good detective.

Sherlock Holmes was an objective thinker, not allowing his biases or predetermined opinions to overtake the facts. You must be selective in your choices, and take each piece of information at face value, with no judgments. He may take that information and compare it to prior cases, or situations, but knowing that not all cases are the same, he uses this information as reference – and just another tool to refer when needed.

Chapter 4 Exercise

1. Sherlock Holmes based his deductions on the information he had stored from past experience, and observation. Just how observant are you? For this exercise, take a nature walk. Taking note of everything you can, from the shape, size and color of the rocks, to the different types of vegetation and insects. What kinds of birds make their homes there?

It's amazing what you see that you never saw before when you take the time to focus on your surroundings.

2. If Sherlock Holmes lived in today's technology society, do you think he would be as astute in observation as he was then? Write down all the types of today's technology you can think of, and then next to these items write down how you think Holmes would best utilize these tools for his deductions.

Do you see a difference in how he would come to his conclusions? Would he be faster than the computers?

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Chapter 5

Was Holmes a Genius With A Photographic Memory?

Wouldn't it be great if you wake up one morning and find you have a photographic memory? You can recall where you put everything, every word your boss told you, and never forget your spouse's birthday again. Who wouldn't!! Unfortunately few people can do that, so the next best thing to do is to find memory techniques that will get you as close to genius as possible.

Many readers of the Sherlock Holmes books believe that Sherlock has a 'photographic', or 'eidetic', memory. They also believe that Holmes is extremely educated, and knowledgeable about every subject. Neither of these is correct.

Dr. Watson let us know that Holmes was not extremely knowledgeable in many areas that he himself thought important - such as astronomy, literature, philosophy and politics. Although he was more informed than Watson believed, he simply dismissed anything that he felt was not relevant to his pursuit of answers. Holmes saw no need to avail himself of information that he felt "clouded his mind" and took away from his final conclusion.

Watson stated in the book, *A Study in Scarlet*, "His ignorance was as remarkable as his knowledge. Of contemporary literature, philosophy and politics he appeared to know next to nothing. Upon my quoting Thomas Carlyle, he inquired in the naivest way who he might be and what he had done. My surprise reached a climax, however, when I found incidentally that he was ignorant of the Copernican Theory, and of the composition of the solar system. That any civilized human being in this nineteenth century should not be aware of the Earth traveling round the sun appeared to me to be such an extraordinary fact that I could hardly realise it."

Holmes, in *The Adventure of the Noble Bachelor* , addressed his deficiencies, insisting “I read nothing except the criminal news and the agony column (obituaries).” When Watson asked him why he was ignorant of such important science findings as the solar system, his answer was, “What the deuce is it to me?”

Holmes was more interested in clearing his mind of useless clutter, and focusing on the job at hand.

It is highly unlikely that Sherlock Holmes was void of any knowledge of the universe and contemporary teachings. A better explanation is that he just did not find that knowledge important enough to talk about at the time because he had too many other more pressing problems to address. He probably did store it in his brain attic, for future reference, but at the particular time it was unimportant.

A photographic memory is one where the person is able to recall things they have seen or read after only experiencing it for a very short time. It has been proven that, although there are a handful of people who actually have that ability, it is rare. Holmes did not have that. He had a normal brain and memory, but he was able to train it to retrieve information from his “mind palace.”

Sorry to disappoint further, but even an amazing memory in one domain, such as visual, is not a guarantee of great memory across the board. That would be rare, if it occurs at all.

I recently ran across a couple of articles that claim it is possible to teach someone to develop a photographic memory. Over the years there have been a number of memory techniques that have been geared toward developing an excellent memory, and they have worked as long as the lessons are practiced. I, personally, have several excellent training programs available to enhance memory, and they have been very successful for thousands of people. What I won't claim is that I can train you to have a photographic memory.

What can be taught is memory improvement. Some people are able to develop an exceptional memory – like those of us who participate in memory championships. Although people may think we have photographic memory, there is not one memory champion who was born with, or been able to develop, a photographic memory. They are all just like me, normal people who have learned and practiced endless hours to develop the memory we have.

Devices have even been made that are supposed to aid in the development of a photographic memory – such as one that came out years ago that claims to record images on cellulose, and then manufacture them onto print photos. There is no such device.

Only recently have scientists been able to scan a person's brain, using a functional magnetic resonance imaging scanner (fMRI) while the people are viewing photographs, and the scientists have been able to closely duplicate that image, but it still is not exact.

Truman Capote, the famous writer, claimed to have nearly absolute recall of dialogue. He used his excellent memory as an excuse as to why he never took notes or used a tape recorder. According to some experts, however, his claim to possessing a photographic memory was probably more of an excuse to take “poetic license” in his writing than total memory recall.

A Russian journalist and professional mnemonists (people with the ability to recall vast amounts of information) claimed his memory was photographic. Psychologist A.R. Luria studied him for over three decades. In the end, Luria concluded that the man, known as “S,” was simply a master of mnemonic techniques (such as the memory palace used by Sherlock Holmes) that allowed him to memorize certain kinds of information.

There is a very small group of people (12 known to currently exist) who have total recall of autobiographical memory – anything that has happened to them, or of information they came in contact with. This is called hyperthymesia, or Superior Autobiographical Memory, and it has been tested to show this condition is due to structural differences in the brain.

This is something they were born with, and cannot be developed through training (Note: one such person is actress Mary Lou Henner, who has been portrayed on the television show, “Unforgettable”.) They do not recall everything that they did not personally come in contact with, so it can not be claimed to be photographic memory. It is as close to it, however, as one can get.

Although there may be people who are born with brain structures that are abnormal, and allow their memory to function better than most people – such as many with autism or ADHD, it still is not something can be developed for those with normal brain structure and chemistry.

Instead of trying for a photographic memory, simply work at improving the memory you do have – through paying more attention, getting better nutrition, exercise, better sleep, memory training techniques, and brain exercises.

So, since there is not such thing as a photographic memory, how does an exceptional memory come to be? It depends on a slew of factors, including our genetics, brain development and experiences.

It is difficult to disentangle memory abilities that appear early from those cultivated through interest and training. Most people, who have exhibited truly extraordinary memories in some particular area of their life, become expert because they have honed them through practice. Just as Sherlock Holmes, Dr. Joseph Bell, and Sir Arthur Conan Doyle did.

A winner of a memory Olympics, such as myself for instance, still has to keep sticky notes on the refrigerator to remember what he has to do during the day. We are able to memorize vast amounts of information on a certain subject, but that doesn’t carry over into all areas of our lives. Me, and every memory champion I have spoken with, was born with a normal brain and memory. What sets us apart is our ability to utilize memory tools, like a mind palace, to compartmentalize and store our memories so we are able to retrieve them at an instant’s notice.

If you ask if you can develop this type of exceptional memory, my answer to you is “YES” because I have done it. It is not a trick, but very much something that you can learn. I will show you how in a short while.

Chapter 5 Exercise

1. Take a pen and paper out, and then find a photo of a room or scene and focus on it for one minute. Do not write anything down until time is up, then write down everything you can think of without looking.

Were you accurate, or did you place items in the scene that you thought should have been there because you expected them to be?

2. For you to understand how the brain stores and recalls memory you can pull out a picture of a family reunion or wedding. Try to recall the people in the photo, where they were, and what they were doing when the picture was taken. A normal person will be able to recognize the faces of the people they know and put a name to them. You may recall something in the picture that will trigger a memory.

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Chapter 6

An Exceptional Ability to Focus

Sherlock Holmes was ever mindful of the world around him, yet able to tune it out if he needed in order to focus on the case at hand. He could go for periods of time without food or sleep when he was concentrating on a case. In today's world there are so many distractions that the ability to focus becomes increasingly difficult, but it can be done.

As William James the founder of modern psychology, once said, "The faculty of voluntarily bringing back a wandering attention, over and over again, is the very root of judgment, character and will."

Are you having problems focusing your thoughts and ideas, or sitting down to do a task you know you have to complete but just can't get into? With so many things that demand our attention it can be difficult to concentrate and pay attention.

Lack of concentration can affect your memory, your ability to learn, and sometimes can be dangerous if you are not paying attention to what you are doing, or where you are going.

Most people have distractions from time to time that cause us to lose focus, and most of them can be explained. Sherlock Holmes did have the ability to focus his attention and eliminate all distractions in order to concentrate on what is on his plate at the moment. Focus is the key in investigation and problem solving.

If you are not focused you won't be able to recall ANYTHING.

Think about this, how many times have you met someone and then three seconds later can't remember what they said their name was? This is not because you have a bad memory, not at all. It is because you were not focused when you were speaking to them. The first key to your memory is **FOCUS**.

I am a veteran of the U.S. Navy and the Gulf War. Because of my military service I became fascinated with the Navy SEALs, and became friends with one in particular, T.C. Cummings. Together we came up with a program titled, “Mind of a Navy SEAL.”

In this program we touch on different things that make the life of a Navy SEAL different from that of any other service, and give tips on how to learn the discipline necessary in order to function at the highest level in a high-stress environment, even under the worst of circumstances.

It was through the training of T.C. that I was able to win my first U.S.A. Memory Championship, having lost the first one I entered, and to go on to win my second. He taught me to change my mindset so I was able to pay more attention and focus on my goal, which was to be able to memorize better.

One of the first things T.C. wanted me to learn was how to create my goal, and keep my focus on only that. Lack of focus leads to lost opportunities, stress, frustration, and physical decline.

When we lose focus we start to get a feeling of being overwhelmed, and when that happens you lose sight of your goal. Most people quit at this stage.

T.C. says that Navy SEALs are no different from anyone else in that they fail all the time. What makes them different is the fact that they don't quit. They continue to practice and practice until everything comes as easily as breathing.

My goal was to improve my ability to be able to memorize more material at a faster rate of speed. In order to do that, I had to improve my memory training technique, and that included keeping my eye on my goal.

Our Brains Are Built To Wander

Our minds are wired to wander, according to neurologist Marcus Raichle. “Wander is their default.” It reverts to this default when it has other activities - when there are too many activities going on at one time (multitasking), so it takes a break. That is when it wanders. It asks itself, “What decision do I make first?” “Is that more important?” etc. The more demands we make on our brain the more it tends to halt, and we find ourselves in a situation where we are unable to make a decision.

Studies have shown that a “mindful” approach - one where the brain teaches itself to focus, can be obtained through meditation, or meditation-like thought, for as little as 15 minutes a day. This activity has been found to improve the activity in the frontal brain that is associated with positive thought. The same study also found that looking at nature scenes, or going out and observing nature, for even short periods of time, can enhance creativity, insightfulness and makes us more productive. In essence, it optimizes our brain to think more clearly, and focus on the task at hand.

How, you say, does this work? By bringing our attention to details, from going from a passive observer to an active one.

As children we observed everything because we were curious. We absorbed as much information as we could. Everything was a wonder, but we did not linger over these observations, we keep exploring to learn more. We were motivated to learn, and our brain was engaged in taking in as much as possible.

If you recall the movie “Short Circuit,” with Steve Guttenberg and Ally Sheedy, the rogue robot Johnny 5 was always searching for “input.” It was constantly craving new information that it could input into its memory base. That is what a child does.

As adults we have moved away from the curiosity and observations, making way for multi-tasking - and this divides our attention, and our ability to focus.

Arthur Conan Doyle, through Sherlock Holmes, probably started training his brain at an early age to fine tune his ability to see details. We think that Holmes is so brilliant, and he appears to have the solutions at the tip of his brain, because his mind immediately refers to past experience, and he trained his brain to retrieve information from his memory at a remarkable speed.

There is so much going on around us that it becomes difficult to complete a job, study, or even get your thoughts organized to get anything done. I know when I sit down to write, and I hear a television blaring from the apartment next door, or kids playing outside, I find it hard to keep my mind on what I want to accomplish.

When I find this happening I have to bring myself back to what I was doing and tune out everything else. Sometimes it can be more difficult than others, and can become very frustrating, but if you try some simple techniques you will find it much easier to get through and proceed.

1. WHERE you choose to concentrate makes a big difference. Find a quite, uncluttered place. Start out by making sure your chair is comfortable and the desk is at the right height for you to work comfortably. If you are not comfortable you will find yourself getting up numerous times to just walk away.
2. Put up calming and motivational pictures – like landscapes and natural images that you find pleasant, and keep them within sight. They will help you focus.
3. If the background is noisy, put on some headphones or instrumental music like “white noise” to drown out the other. This will help you to better focus and forget about the distractions.
4. Make sure you have some water at your desk, and eat plenty of protein. It’s harder to concentrate when you are hungry, or dehydrated. Avoid sugars, as they will only give you a temporary blast of energy, and then you will suddenly crash when the sugar high drops. Eat small snacks throughout the day to avoid that 3 o’clock slump.

5. Take a break periodically. Research has shown that regularly getting up and moving around can help to increase your focus, and getting away from work for a short time will recharge your brain. If things start to get stressful, you need to walk away for a bit. Albert Einstein found that walking away from a problem allowed him to come back with a different perspective, and he usually was able to solve his problem.
6. Focus on one job at a time. Multi-tasking may sound like you are getting a lot done, but in fact, instead of doing one job done well until completed many jobs are done haphazardly, or not completed.
7. Turn off your cell phone and close your email and chat room. Let your voicemail take your messages and you can return to them when you have a break. The email is not going anywhere, and unless the chat room is for business, your personal life can be taken care of after work.
8. Prioritize. Sort your jobs in the order of importance. Too many jobs can be distracting, and if you are quickly jumping from one thing to another you aren't accomplishing as much as you think, even though you are constantly busy.
9. Some jobs take more out of you than others. Switch back and forth so you don't drain your resources. This gives your brain a rest after heavy work, and allows it time to recharge with the light stuff. This is NOT multi-tasking. You only are working on one project at a time.
10. Promise yourself a reward when you get finished. Little bonuses can be motivators, so when you get to a certain point, give yourself a treat. After all, you earned it!

Multitasking is a Brain Drain

Multi-tasking is the biggest culprit when it comes to taking your focus away from what you should be doing. You may think you are accomplishing so much when they are doing more than one task at a time, but the facts don't support that.

Countless research studies suggest that each time you take your attention from one task to work on another you actually lose time because your brain has to shift gears and then get back to where you were before. Our brains are not made to multi-task.

If you find that you have to do more than one project at a time, save the less demanding ones for times that are less stressful – like you can clean up your desk while talking on the phone. If possible, delegate the work to someone else so you can devote your attention and energy to the primary task. You will find that multi-tasking can cause more errors than taking one task at a time.

Taking your eyes off your goal causes errors, and often you end up not completing the goal. Keeping your concentration on what you are trying to achieve will be more efficient, in the end, and will ensure that you complete what you set out to do.

Research published in *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences* out of the University of California at San Francisco (UCSF) shows that multitasking can take a toll on our working memory, especially as people age, because they find it harder to switch from one activity to another quickly.

“The research is consistent with existing studies and peoples’ everyday experiences,” said Gary Small, MD, a psychiatrist and the author of *iBrain: Surviving the Technological Alteration of the Modern Man*. “You say, I’ve got to go to the market to get eggs, but then you get home and you’ve got 20 other things and you forgot the eggs. As your brain ages, it’s harder to get back to the task at hand after an interruption.”

Since multitasking is a part of life, we have to learn to deal with the distractions while not losing sight of the objective – in my case the U.S. Memory Championship. Understanding the importance of attention skills, and focusing on one thing at a time as you continue to practice these skills, is essential to retaining memory.

By not allowing distractions to derail us, and maintaining focus on the project at hand, we can be successful in improving our memory. It worked for me!

A Healthy Life Makes For A Focused Mind

There are lots of things that help your brain's ability to focus, including drinking plenty of water; getting a good night's sleep; eating "brain food" such as spinach, blueberries, apples, walnuts, and fish high in Omega 3. Avoid any medication that makes you drowsy, and reduce the amount of salt and sugar in your diet.

The rule of thumb for me is just trying to live a healthy life. This will impact your brain and your ability to focus. However, 95% of what I teach, and 99.9% of the Sherlock Holmes Memory Palace, is technique related and not health or nutrition related. So let's focus on the specific memory techniques but keep in mind - without focus everything falls apart.

Chapter 6 Exercise

1. Take a quick trip in your mind back to your old neighborhood. You will recall places you played, people who lived in a certain house, what color the houses were, what smells lingered in the air, who lived on what street, and many details. If you were to visit today you would be able to point out things that are missing, or different, from when you grew up. You can recall these things because you were familiar with them, you experienced them every day, and you can still see them as if you were still there now.

If a stranger were to go down that same street they would not be able to pick out any changes, because they were not familiar with them in the first place. It is new to them. You are able to reference from past experience, while they are just seeing it for the first time.

What's funny is, that although you can recall many of these details now, as they were taking place they were just part of you – you didn't repeat to yourself every day that so-and-so lives there, or the color of the Baker house was yellow - it just was.

2. Find a quiet spot and just focus your attention on one subject. Do you feel better able to think and accomplish something?

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Chapter 7

Memory and Senses Are Used To Solve Problems

Sherlock Holmes does not simply rely on what he SEES when drawing his conclusions. All of his senses come into play. Our senses are the filter for all the information we process in our brain. Through the use of our five senses – sight, hearing, touch, smell and taste, our short-term memory filters the information that is then sent to our brain cells (neurons). From there the signals are transmitted through connections called neurotransmitters, to our memory. It's much like what you would think a telephone line would do, routing and rerouting your transmissions until it comes to its final destination.

Simple? Not really. The brain and how it processes memory is complex. It involves a lot of different links that work together efficiently.

Healthy brains use different areas of the brain for different things. For example, there is musical memory for sounds and lyrics you have heard and want to remember; and there is sensory memory, that recalls things you have seen or smelled, tasted, touched and heard. All of these are stored in different areas of the brain.

It is good that not all memories are stored in the same place. If an injury or illness affects one area of the brain, that portion may lose the memory stored there, but memory stored in other areas will remain intact, or new connections can form to take over where the loss occurred.

The brain is a smart cookie. It knows that safeguards need to be in place so that not all your memories are affected if something should happen. Often other areas of the brain will work to reroute the connections to make up for the injury or loss. Contrary to what you may think, your brain forms new connections all the time.

The only way you would lose all your memory is if the injury or illness was so severe that it wiped out everything, such as in the case of dementia. Your

brain memory controls all your bodily functions, so if all parts of the brain were to deteriorate, your body would too, until it eventually stops working altogether.

Memory is Not Immediate

If you think you can remember things right away – think again. Literally! Memory does not happen right away. You don't just experience something and it will automatically go to your long-term memory so you can recall it when you want. There is a process involved, and not everything ends up in memory. As a matter of fact, most of what you experience ends up in the trash.

It is likely, if Sherlock Holmes were real, that he started to develop his memory skills at an early age, even though he may not have been aware of what a memory palace was, or how it worked. Since Arthur Conan Doyle used the memory palace in his writing, he has obviously used it in his own life, and started developing his memory early as well.

Our memory starts to develop from the second we are born, but since our brains are not developed yet we have no point of reference. We have to develop it. We learn by repetition, so the more we hear a voice; feel a loving touch; or smell a specific fragrance, the easier it will be for us to hold it in our memory.

As infants we learn by repetition. We learn that when we cry someone will come and pick us up or react to us. By six months we can remember familiar objects - like bottles and crib, and we can remember an object for a few hours. At nine months we can remember an object for a month, and by 12 months we can identify objects that are not related to our care.

The more we learn to communicate and build words and vocabulary, the larger our memory will become. Before the age of three it's likely that a child will forget more than he/she remembers - and unlikely that any memories will be permanent. At that age their memory is just starting to

develop. By the fourth year, most children don't fully understand what memory is, but they are likely to say they forgot something.

These first years are when our brains develop the fastest, we are learning to coordinate our limbs, learning language, and communication. That doesn't necessarily mean our brains are fully developed yet, however, since won't completely happen until our mid-20s.

An article in the journal, *Child Development*, reported that researchers from Saarland University in Germany have found that memory is something that develops slowly, from birth to adulthood.

In this study, young children, adolescents and young adults were given a two-part memory test by the researchers. Electroencephalogram caps were fitted to their heads that measured brain activity. Images were shown on a computer screen, and they were asked to take note of the images they are seeing for the first time, and if they were repeated. The second part of the test was similar to the first, but they were asked to mark the pictures they had seen in the first set.

Generally the results showed that memory performance improved with age, but from the second group of tests the researchers found that young children were weak in their ability to trace the source of memory.

Adults and adolescents performed equally well, but the significant difference was that the adults showed a sophisticated pattern in activity when they were retrieving source memory information, according to the study's lead author, Volker Sprondel, a psychologist at Saarland. Sprondel said that if they were measuring behavioral activity alone they would have found a big difference in brain activity between adolescents and adults. The findings suggest, he added, that when children and adolescents are asked to testify as to the reliability of their source memory - for example, recalling the first time a certain person was encountered, and where - their memory should probably be in question.

What is Memory?

The human brain is so complex that it is made up of several different sections, each having its own function, or functions. All of these areas can work together at one time, or they can work separately. Sometimes, if damage were to occur, other areas of the brain make up for the loss of function until the damage can be repaired. That is why, if someone has been injured in the front area of the brain it could affect their short-term memory, but not long-term memories, or the memories the brain carries to perform certain functions, like walking.

It is almost like a family tree, where there are main branches and offshoots of those branches. The offshoots have more branches. For instance: somewhere in long-term memory, musical memory is stored – although scientists are not certain whether musical memory is part of the long-term memory or it has its own individual subset, they have found that some people who were musically inclined their entire life, and then lost their memory – through injury or illness like dementia, were still able to recall the music they had heard or played.

What are the other forms of memory, you ask, and what are their functions?

According to Webster's Dictionary, memory is "the mental capacity or faculty of retaining or recalling facts, events, impressions or previous experiences."

Science defines memory in six different phases:

- **Short-Term Memory** – Where you can remember something for a brief period of time - such as a telephone number - until you dial it.
- **Recent Memory** – Processing information you just learned, or going through day-to-day activities.
- **Sensory Memory** – Recalling smells, sights, taste, touch and sounds

- **Long-Term Memory** – Bringing up distant memories and experiences
- **Declarative Memory** – General knowledge skills, such as vocabulary words and facts
- **Procedural Memory** – Automatic memory of motor skills - chewing, walking or riding a bicycle.

Our brains store over 100 trillion bits of information, and many more are lost or forgotten before they ever get stored – usually seconds after we receive the data. What we move to long-term memory is affected by a lot of outside, and inside, factors – amount of sleep we get, proper diet, drugs, personal motivation, fears, and other forces.

Why does so much of our memory die away before it has a chance to be saved? Our brain retains information when we have ties to the information through experience or previous exposure. If we do not associate the information with something we are familiar with it is lost within a few seconds.

Holmes said, in *The Adventure of the Lion's Mane*, “My mind is like a crowded box-room with packets of all sorts stowed away therein – so many that I may well have but a vague perception of what was there.” Our brains are full of information that we have accumulated over time. It would be impossible to function if we weren't able to store it someplace so it didn't all come flooding at us at once. It would also be useless to us if we weren't able to retrieve it when we needed it.

So, how does it work so we can store it, and bring a memory back, when we want to?

Picture your memory as a library - where items are recorded (encoded) in a card catalog and stored on shelves in sections. If you want to retrieve information you need to go to the proper section and shelf.

Just think, it all starts with our five senses – touch, sight, smell, hearing and taste. Whatever we take in is processed through what is called our **Sensory**

Memory, and it records what we have experienced through our senses.

These memories are short-takes - where the brain acknowledges that you experience something through one or more of your senses, and then passes the sensation on to your short-term memory. For example: you touch the doorknob and it is cold. This information is acknowledged and passed on to short-term memory.

Think of the soft touch of a baby's skin, or the sight of spring buds on a tree after a long, hard winter. These are things you can recall, even if you aren't experiencing the sense of feeling or seeing these things. That is sensory memory.

When you think of Sherlock Holmes analyzing a crime scene you immediately see him observing the scene, taking in everything around him. If there is a body he touches it to see if it has been dead for any length of time. He looks at the victim's clothes for any sign of a struggle, or if anything seems out of sync. He is often known to lean into the body to detect any odor of poison or other distinguishing smells, and even tastes a clue for something that he can reference in his memory bank. He also takes note of the sounds around him. In a few short seconds he has used all of his senses to put into his memory for use in solving this crime.

Although we all see with our eyes, we have to learn to "see" with all our senses.

Where is Memory Stored?

There are two main memory systems that need to be in place in order for the process to work, with no backlog of information. One system is your **short-term memory**; the other is your **long-term memory**. All information passes through a narrow channel, like a conveyor belt, where it is only held for a brief few seconds and encoded. It then moves along to either be dumped in the trash container, or processed and sent to long-term memory where it is filed.

Short-term Memory

A physical change takes place in the brain whenever something is remembered. Our brains are constantly changing. How long you remember it depends on how you think about the information, how you relate it to something in your life, and how many distractions you encounter as you are processing it.

Short-term memory receives a signal from your sensory memory and unscrambles it in order to decide whether it should be held and passed on to the long-term memory, or discarded. Memories in short-term holding can stay there anywhere from a few seconds to a day or two. Short-term memory is also referred to as “working memory,” although it does perform a function other than processing information. Working memory is needed to perform complex tasks such as reasoning, comprehension and learning.

Your memory is influenced by perspective, accuracy and distortion. Example: You are asked to look at a photo of an office for one minute, and then asked to remember as much as possible about what you saw. You remember items that you usually expect to see in an office – like a desk and chair, even if they weren’t there, because they are usually part of an office.

People tend to remember things they are motivated to remember. Just as Sherlock Holmes will bring forth the memories he needs for a specific case by recalling memories stored in his “mind palace.” (We will address the mind palace in upcoming chapters).

Long-Term Memory

Memory is not stored in just one place in our brain, lucky for us. There is a group of systems that are drawn from to recall information, and sometimes it takes more than one storage area to be able to put a memory together. How does that happen? Through four separate processes that takes place after the short-term memory releases the data:

- Encoding
- Storage
- Retrieval
- Deletion

Encoding is just like it sounds, the information is converted to code (similar to a .zip file) that can be easily filed into your memory storage system. The human mind encodes through association. The encoded data is then sent to the brain cells, with the help of hormones and chemicals, through neuroconnections (brain connections).

In order for memory to be stored there must be a chemical change to take place. The **Storage** area holds the encoded cells until they are sent for retrieval. Research has found that time and consistency help retain the information in storage for the long-term.

The **Retrieval** process brings the image out of storage for its use - like recalling specific tasks, or how to discuss a certain topic. There really isn't any conscious thought involved in retrieval; it's like working on "automatic."

Deletion is basically forgetting. It is not certain whether we actually lose all the information in our memory when we delete it, or if it simply buries itself a little deeper into our subconscious. The information basically is inaccessible. Deletion may not be a negative thing, however, it offers our brain a chance to clean house and get rid of unnecessary information in order to maximize efficiency – it is basically a protection mechanism. Just as with a computer, if you delete something it doesn't entirely get lost forever, unless the entire memory system is wiped clean. It remains stored in some inaccessible place, but could possibly be retrieved if we knew how to do that.

Sherlock Holmes has maximized his efficiency in thought process by immediately encoding what he takes in, deleting what is insignificant to him, storing what is needed in his memory palace, and retrieving it immediately – almost without processing it consciously.

Our long-term memory is structurally and functionally different from our working or short-term memory. It is our storage and retrieval system for all the memories we are able to hold on to and bring back, and necessary in order to keep our life in sync and our brain healthy.

Long-term memory is what your short-term memory has deemed appropriate to keep for future reference. Your memories are stored in files – our memory palace, so you can retrieve them when you want them.

When we want to retrieve information we do it from long-term memory. This information can be stored just as it says, for long-term or life. As far as neuroscientists know, long-term memory has no limit, so as many memories as you can gather, and your short-term memory will allow, are saved and passed on to long-term memory.

Long-term memory can be divided into two separate categories:

- Declarative Memory
- Procedural Memory

The declarative memory stores facts that can be recalled to your conscious mind for discussion or “declaration.” Declarative memory can be broken down further into categories: episodic and semantic memory.

Episodic, or autobiographical memory is the bringing back of personal experiences, such as times, emotions, places and events. It is the who, what, why, when and where that we actually experienced. For example, if you remember the party your 8th birthday party, this is an episodic memory. You basically can travel back in your own time.

It is crucial to our normal functioning that we have the ability to recognize elements in the surrounding environment - such as faces or places, as well as the ability to learn about that environment.

Semantic memory is a recalling facts, skills, information and concepts we have learned over the years that are unrelated to personal experiences.

Procedural memory is repetitive learning skills, like riding a bike or tying shoelaces. It allows us to understand the world around us, like what a bus looks like because we have retained that image in our memory.

As you can see, there are many branches to the memory tree.

Chapter 7 Exercise

1. Describe the words you see here using as many senses as possible. – sight, touch, smell, hearing and taste. This is a good exercise in bringing together our senses with the words we use – thus stimulating different parts of the brain. Visualize the following:

- Gasoline
- A rose garden
- Gingerbread cookies
- Wet dog
- Spring rain
- Rain
- An apple pie baking
- Lavender
- Burning leaves
- Fresh mown lawn
- Skunk
- Stinky feet
- Fertilizer
- Cooked cabbage
- Mint (a natural brain stimulant)

For videos on how to memorize like Sherlock Holmes visit sherlockskills.com



Chapter 8

Reading the Signs

As we have already concluded, Sherlock Holmes was a master at observing the clues and putting them together. He noted what he saw, and what was missing. He took in the surroundings, and noted things that were out of place. He spoke to witnesses, and by the way they spoke, or their body language, was able to tell when they were lying, and when they were sincere. All these components came into play when he evaluated the situation and came up with a conclusion.

According to UCLA professor Albert Mehrabian, “55% of what you convey comes from body language, 38% from the tone of your voice, and only 7% from the words you say.”

A friend of mine is a loss prevention consultant for a major retail chain. When he investigates theft from a store he interviews all those who would come in contact with the merchandise that is missing – the delivery drivers; employees who work in the receiving department and loading dock; the store employees who work in that particular department; and even the managers.

He observes their body language; the direction in which they look when answering a question; their reactions to certain questions; facial expressions; and how they respond to accusations. He has become an expert on non-verbal communication and how the body reacts under stress, to indicate if the person is lying or telling the truth. This ability to read signs is an art that Sherlock Holmes mastered, and IT CAN BE TAUGHT.

Body Language

When looking for indicators that a person is lying or telling the truth, a study of body language will be your best indicator. Watch how they stand, is it stiff or casual? Do they fold their arms across their chest, or hang them to their side? Do they exhibit signs of nervousness, like touching their face, or twirling their hair? Do they look you directly in the eye when speaking to you, or do they tend to look away?

Someone who turns their head or body away when answering a question, or moves to put a barrier between the questioner and themselves, are usually indicating they are lying.

A psychologist at the University of Virginia, Dr. Bella DePaulo, reported in a 1986 study that most people believe they are good at reading people's body language, when in fact they are not. We often tend to base our opinions on folklore or what other people tell us, like 'a person with "shifty" eyes is lying.' They also think that if a person gets angry when questioned they are lying, when in fact it doesn't mean one or the other. You have to base your information on how that particular person reacts normally for each situation.

Facial and Verbal Expressions

A momentary flash of expression on a person's face could indicate what they are actually thinking (micro-expressions). Almost anyone can be trained to detect what a twinge in facial expression can tell. If a person is lying, their eyebrows draw together and up toward the middle of their forehead, causing lines to appear across the forehead.

Although we have the ability to read a person's intentions based on their eye movement by the time we are four, most of us do not develop this talent further. It is safe to say that if a person is interested or engaged with another person the pupils of their eyes get bigger. If they dislike something or someone, their pupils will contract.

A study conducted in 1999 found that those who are more analytical in their thinking (left brain people) will mostly look to the right, while right brained people tend to look left. When lying, a person usually will shift their eyes to the opposite direction they usually do. Once again, every person is different, so you can't always go on that theory either.

An innocent person will often respond with anger and go on the offensive, while a guilty person will either act nonchalant or go on the defensive - like accusing someone else or reaffirming what they had already said.

The following verbal expressions can be indicators as to whether a person is lying:

- Over explain, or going to great lengths to answer the question in detail
- Lack of contractions and/or pronouns in speech
- Changes in the pitch of their voice
- Redirecting their answers to direct questions
- Extensive silence, as though they are trying to come up with the "right" answer
- Repeating words or phrases when answering a question
- A break in thought pattern, or pause in mid-sentence

Not everyone reacts the same in each situation, and there is no one-size-fits-all for every condition. Take grief, for instance, some people react with anger; some cry inconsolably; and still others go about their business as if nothing has changed. The one who doesn't react is thought to be unaffected, while in reality they simply could be in shock. There is no "normal" for grief.

Other considerations come into play, such as gender of the person; type of cultural environment in which they were raised (Example: Real men don't cry.); how close they were to the person who passed; and so on. All conditions have to become a part of the picture.

The same would hold true for telling the truth. Simply because a person sweats when being interrogated does not necessarily mean they are guilty. It could mean they are extremely nervous, and this is how they react when

under stress. It also takes into consideration the circumstances under which they are being questioned. For example, a woman at a bar holding a discussion with an attractive male may be twirling her hair while answering his questions. In this situation one would conclude she is flirting. That same woman, when being questioned for theft, could also be twirling her hair because she is nervous.

You have to take in other clues in order to come to a conclusion – each clue evaluated on an individual basis. Reading body language is fine-tuned over time, and is not taken alone as a means of classifying someone. It's like quoting a person out of context, you have to have the whole picture before you can make an evaluation.

In Chapter 3 I referred to Dr. Joseph Bell, Holmes' mentor, as having the ability to evaluate a person and their job without ever having known them before. He used a combination of verbal and non-verbal clues to establish that a patient was a military man and where he had been stationed, simply by the way he carried himself and his skin color.

Bell observed how the man stood stiffly erect – as if he was practiced in the way the military train their people to stand straight and at attention. He also observed the man looked tired and walked with a slight limp, as if he had been wounded. His face was dark, yet his hands and arms indicated that he was naturally lighter complexion, suggesting that he had been exposed to the beating sun, yet they were currently in winter in England. The man looked tired and haggard, as if he was not getting enough sleep. He put this all together as the man having just come back from a hot place where there was much to keep him awake and on guard. A military man who had just come from a hot climate where there was unrest – a war. The only war going on at the time was in Afghanistan. He therefore came to the conclusion the man was a soldier who had just come back from Afghanistan.

Bell put these clues together quickly, as if unconsciously retrieving these facts to form a conclusion was second nature. These are the qualities Doyle gave to Holmes – the ability to observe and put clues together as if it were

easy as pie. This art takes practice, practice and more practice. No one is born with this ability.

Our brains process what we see, but even though we see it, we miss a lot. There is a difference between seeing and observing.

Objective Observation to Subjective Opinion

Numerous studies have been conducted as to how people form their opinions. Most often people use visual cues, and their own personal preferences, to form a conclusion. This was something Sherlock Holmes was able to avoid. He would separate his objective observations from his personal opinions and preferences. He does this by being able to know and understand how his own mind works.

For instance, when Watson and Holmes were introduced to Mary Morstan (later to become Mary Watson) in *The Sign of Four*, they both had a different way of seeing her.

Watson described her this way: “She was blonde young lady, small, dainty, well gloved, and dressed in the most perfect taste. Her face had neither regularity of feature, nor beauty of complexion, but her expression was sweet and amiable, and her large blue eyes were singularly spiritual and sympathetic.”

Holmes, on the other hand, conducted a series of observations (that he did not reveal to anyone) and concluded she was an only child, clever, a nurse, a linguist, romantic, shortsighted, owned a cat, wore a size 12, likes to bake, had scar from an appendix operation, has a tattoo, and was a disillusioned Liberal Democrat. He also concluded that she was a “liar.”

Watson was impressed by her based on his own personal bias. He said she “dressed in the most perfect taste,” which meant his type of style that reflected his view of “taste.” He was physically drawn to her, and formed the opinion that she was “spiritual and sympathetic” based on her “large blue eyes.” His was a subjective opinion.

Holmes looked at her objectively. From his basis of information – body language, knowledge of speech patterns, mannerisms, hair on her clothing from the cat, etc. he was able to come to his deductions.

Remember that the brain is filtering a large amount of data. It is up to us to learn how those filters work.

Con Artists Have Fine-Tuned Their Memory and Observation Skills

The ability of a con man or woman to be successful depends on their memory and highly refined observational skills. They need to know what to look for in a person's body language, demeanor or attitude that makes them a target. This is why Holmes found it so useful to spend as much time as possible in the company of con artists and criminals – to observe their behavior in order to catch them.

According to former con artist turned magician/card shark, Stan Lovell, “You must have an encyclopedic knowledge of odd bits of trivia, and use these facts to win people over.” This is where the ability to memorize and retain what you learn is important (if you want to become a con artist or a detective).

Now, I'm not advocating becoming a con artist as a vocation to aspire to, but knowing what they are looking for will help you not become a target yourself, as well as solve crimes and think like Sherlock Holmes.

One of the best ways to learn and retain memory is to focus and concentrate. It certainly is an area that con artists have developed. If you were to watch a couple of television shows on the air recently that actually use characters of people who either were con men, or pretended to be psychic because of their highly-tune sense of observation, you will understand the concept.

In the television show “*The Mentalist*,” Patrick Jane turned the skills he learned as a con artist into the ability to help catch criminals. At one time he was considered a psychic because he had been able to develop his observation skills so well that the people he targeted for his con actually believed he had psychic ability.

In the show “*Psych*,” Shawn pretends to be a psychic in order to solve crimes for the Santa Barbara Police Department, when in fact he actually had been taught by his father from early on what to look for when trying to solve puzzles. This uncanny ability to see things that others did not made it easier for him to persuade people he had some kind of supernatural powers. His characters, and that of Patrick Jane in *The Mentalist*, show you that the ability to observe things that stick out, that are out of place, can be a valuable tool.

Criminals are just human beings, not psychic, nor infallible. They will always overlook something, no matter how well planned it was ahead of time. A criminologist is trained to find that small piece of the puzzle, and can do it from the crime scene; from some trait the criminal has that does not fit with the norm; from the criminals background; or by simply taking the demeanor of the criminal and watching for what their body language says, how their voice changes, or some minor thing that will tip the scale in the law enforcement’s favor.

“I can spot someone’s weakness a mile away. In any room I can pick out the best target,” says Lovell during a lunch interview. “Take that woman over there.” He motions across the room towards a lady trying to get the attention of her companion, who is concentrating on his menu. She appears to be “vulnerable, needy, and looking for attention from the man she is with, but he won’t give it to her,” he says. “She even lacks the social skills to get the waiter’s attention.” He also pointed to a middle-aged man with excellent posture, whom he says appears to be “Over-dressed, too neat, over-confident, thinks he is too smart to be taken. “But ultimately,” says Lovell, “anyone can be conned, if you have the [guts] to do it.” And, Lovell outta know, he spent a big part of his life observing body language and tells that show him who makes the person most vulnerable.

Con men tend to be excellent conversationalists. “Many men kissed the Blarney Stone,” Lovell likes to say, “a con man has swallowed it.” A con man puts a victim at ease by telling a story that reveals his own rather similar anxieties, thereby forging a “mutual understanding.”

A con artist, swindler, and in most cases a proclaimed psychic, needs to be able to remember things he/she has said before, and remember the research they did on their “mark,” in order to be successful. In order to avoid becoming a target you have to think like a con artist. Sherlock Holmes observed this behavior in order to catch the con artist at his own game.

You need to know what your body language says about you.

You need to listen to how you come across to other people – are you a whiner or complainer? Do you come across as a victim? Are you insecure? Do you try to look as if you are too secure (which is another way of saying you are insecure)? These are all traits of a good target.

Are you able to read other people’s body language? What does it say about them?

Focus on the “entire picture.” Look all around you, at all aspects of a situation. This requires all your senses working at their optimum level – and can only be done by keeping your mind and body fit, and your attention focused.

All of these examples show how the ability to focus and concentrate, and the ability to remember what they saw or heard, solves crimes. It also solves problems in everyday life – small problems like forgetting your spouse’s birthday; or large problems like where you placed important papers for your job.

Process of Elimination

It's not his deductive powers and reasoning that gives Holmes his power over us. He in fact doesn't use it. In *The Sign of Four*, Holmes declares: "I never guess. It is a shocking habit - destructive to the logical faculty." Yet, Doyle has crafted his character to use deductive reasoning that includes a large amount of guesswork.

Holmes notices things other people don't, and then - using a creative imagination and mental agility, comes up with hypotheses he tests one by one.

He can see unlikely patterns - what Watson explains as his "extraordinary genius for minutiae." Holmes explains it to Inspector Lestrade of Scotland Yard when he said, "You know my method. It is founded on the observation of trifles."

He said to Holmes, "I can never bring you to realise the importance of sleeves," he tells Watson, "the suggestiveness of thumb nails, or the great issues that may hang from a bootlace."

Holmes uses actual evidence to reach his conclusions. He had the knack for knowing where to look, asking the right questions that cut to the chase, and creating his theories based upon the evidence he had uncovered, and is not above breaking the law when it gets in his way, or seems unfair under the circumstances.

"When you have excluded the impossible, whatever remains, however improbable, must be the truth," says Holmes so as to explain his deductive reasoning as a process of elimination.

Chapter 8 Exercise

1. A great way to study up on body language is to observe a poker game – either in person or on the television. Each player has some kind of “tell” that will reveal whether they are playing a good hand or bluffing. Watch the body language. Are you able to read their faces? Do they have certain hand gestures or habits that indicate the outcome of the hand?

Start with observing just one or two players at a time and gradually work your way up to checking out more. Here are some things to look for:

- Watch betting patterns, these are the main tells. What is the pattern you have observed through different hands? People tend to bet the same way, if they have a good hand they could up the ante, or if their hand is not so good they will only call. Betting patterns will tell you a lot.
- Smiling eyes usually indicate a good hand. Watch their lips, if they are pursed, or tight, they are uncertain.
- Look at the chip stacks. If it is untidy, they usually play loose. A neat stack is a more conservative player. If they play with their chips they are not usually uncertain, or are deciding whether their opponent has a better hand than they do and are not sure to bet or call. They are anticipating an attack by an opponent.
- How are they holding themselves? Are they hunched over their chips? This indicated nervousness. If they are leaning back, that is an indication of confidence.
- Are they shaking their legs? This is an indication of excitement and anticipation.

- You may not get them right away. Professional players are best at hiding their tells, which is why many wear sun glasses or hats to hide their eyes, but when under pressure most will revert back to their usual habits.
- Some people will try to use reverse psychology, by appearing to be super confident or fiddling with their chips so you think they are uncertain. Past experience and observation will tell you this is their tell.

Practice this game to hone your observation skills. Do you see an improvement in your ability to find a tell?

2. Ask a friend to write down the names of four of their family members you do not know. Ask them to make up a name for a fifth family member. This member will be their lie.

You then ask the same question five times, with your friend saying the name of one from the list. Observe their behavior when they say each name, and try to figure out which name was the fake. With practice you can soon detect which name is the lie.

For videos on how to memorize like Sherlock Holmes visit sherlockskills.com



Chapter 9

What and Where Is The Mind Palace?

“I consider that a man’s brain originally is like a little empty attic, and you have to stock it with such furniture as you choose. A fool takes in all the lumber of every sort that he comes across, so that the knowledge which might be useful to him gets crowded out, or at best is jumbled up with a lot of other things, so that he has a difficulty in laying his hands upon it.” - Sherlock Holmes in *A Study In Scarlet*

Sherlock Holmes is known for his ability to recall just about any detail using what he called his “Memory Palace,” “Mind Palace,” or “brain attic.” This memory technique is also known as the “Method of Loci,” and this technique is EXACTLY what Sherlock Holmes’ Mind Palace is about. It is a memory tool expertly implemented by Sherlock Holmes - but it did not originate with him.

The search for the way for man to store, retain and recover memory has been going on since the cavemen days. Even then, cavemen had to remember things - where they could find their food source; what plants were poisonous; etc. in order to survive. Cavemen learned through observation, experience, repetition and trial-and-error – exactly the same process by which we learn today.

When it comes to the memory palace, as the story goes (and of course we have no way of knowing how accurate this story is), this system goes back 2,500 years ago, specifically to the year of 477 BC.

A man named Simonedes lived in Greece. He was a poet, and is known as the father of memory training. He was in a building for a banquet, and had just left when the roof collapsed, killing everyone inside. The bodies were crushed beyond recognition, and since he had just left moments before, he was asked to come and identify the bodies.

When he identified the bodies he did not do it based on how they looked, because they were mostly unrecognizable, but instead he remembered

where they were seated at the time of the collapse.

Then the light bulb went off in his head. He asked himself, what if I could memorize anything based on a position in a room? For example, he wondered, “What if it was not my friends in those spots in the room, but a list of words I wanted to remember.” Instead of my friend from work who was seated at that table, what if it was the first line of a poem I saw there? Could I memorize an entire poem by imagining it around the room?

Simonides, again as the story goes, went back to his home and numbered locations around the home - such as a chair, door, window, table, etc., and he remembered the numbers he assigned these items. He was then able to go back and name all the people in the banquet room based on where they were seated, and how he had assigned them in his memory.

That was the birth of the method of loci, or the Memory Palace method, and the system that Sherlock Holmes uses.

The method of loci was the “correct” memory technique in ancient Greece. In the first century BC, the scholar Cicero taught people how to remember a speech by using the method of loci to retain each point. He would mentally stroll through the loci of his house and recall points the students were making as they delivered a speech.

Rulers during the Renaissance period invited memory specialists to court to help them to remember important facts in history, geography and names of important people.

A complicated peg schemes were used by members of the courts in the 1500s. Instead of memorizing items by getting a mental image of a physical place, they used mental “pegs” organized on an imaginary wall. They assigned an item or piece of information for each peg.

Throughout the 1600s and 1700s, memory specialists ignored the method of loci, putting the emphasis more on the learning of ideas through association and visualization. Freud also influenced many students of memory by showing that depression and negative emotions can have a

negative effect on memory. His theory was that their “repressed” memories were upsetting which caused memory problems.

In 1885, Herman Ebbinghaus conducted research that proved that although people could learn short lists, long lists were more difficult, and that by trying to remember longer list instead of shorter ones the information learned was quickly lost. Ebbinghaus’ research influenced many generations of memory researchers.

With the advance of technology and neuroscience, researchers in the fields of health care, psychiatry, and psychology have continued to search for the best way to understand the brain and how it processes and recalls memory. They have found simple emotions, memorizing lists, or picturing things in your mind it not the whole picture.

From their studies they have found the amount of synapse (connections) the brain makes to take things from short term to long term memory is more complicated than they had originally thought, and outside forces - like environment, socialization, sleep, health, exercise and diet impact how your brain processes and retains information.

All told, each generation has found a way that works for them, and many have remained through the centuries – like the memory palace. The workings of the brain are complicated, and the more we learn about how we process information, learn, and store memory, the more questions keep coming up.

The way your brain performs is based on a lot of circumstances. The more neuroscientists are able to find out, and more memory experts will be able to present new methods that will enhance the memory process, including the use of new electronic technology. This new information will do much to help in the development of new ways to help people with brain damage, mental problems and memory loss due to dementia.

The first question we must answer is: Is this Mind Palace fiction, or is it a real skill that anyone can master?

The truth is, Sherlock Holmes' Mind Palace is something that we can ALL use to remember just about any detail that we want - names, numbers, facts, quotes, poems, bible verses...whatever. It is not exclusive to Sherlock Holmes. It is, however, neat and tidy, not cluttered and disheveled.

Holmes' brain attic was as real to him as any physical structure, the only difference being that his brain attic is expandable, and could always make room for more "furniture." He could go there, turn the lights on, and tell you exactly what he has stored in every piece of furniture.

Sherlock's mind palace is full of lots of information, on many different subjects, all related to his work. Although he had much stored there, however, he was not a hoarder. He did not want it cluttered with junk, and so was very picky as to what he chose to place there.

Sherlock himself once told Holmes, "I consider that a man's brain originally is like a little empty attic, and you have to stock it with such furniture as you choose. A fool takes in all the lumber of every sort that he comes across, so that the knowledge which might be useful to him gets crowded out, or at best is jumbled up with a lot of other things, so that he has a difficulty in laying his hands upon it. Now the skillful workman is very careful indeed as to what he takes into his brain-attic."

Our brain attic is a combination of things we compile from our senses – see, touch, hear, taste and smell; and our past – upbringing, education, experiences, lessons, prejudices, habits, etc. It expands to bring in more information, and it contracts to eliminate what it no longer needs. As we travel through our thought process we take in and discard all the time in order to come to go about our daily lives, making our own conclusions.

An example of Holmes' mind attic and workings would be his knowledge of our solar system. It is not, as Watson claimed, that Holmes does not know of Copernicus and the solar system, it is simply that Holmes does not think that knowledge is relevant to him or anything he may need to know at the moment, so he excludes it from his brain attic. Although he couldn't help

but hear or learn about it somewhere, he chose not to keep it and clutter his attic.

The content of our brain's attic is not fixed. We are able to make changes and alter our thinking as we grow and learn. We are not stuck thinking a certain way because that is the only way, and we can't budge. We make conscious changes every day. What we experience and learn each and every day simply adds to the contents of our attic. If we stay in the same thinking it's because we continuously repeat this thought and practice this behavior, and we stubbornly don't want to take the time to make the change to alter that thinking.

Our memory forms the basis for how we think and make decisions. The beginning structures of most of our brains are fairly identical, but what we store in our brain attic is what makes all the difference. It is constantly taking in new information, and discarding old, throughout our lives – and YES, we can learn new behavior when we get old.

The audio that we recommend you listen to in conjunction with this book is part of a larger program that you can find at sherlockskills.com. If you don't have the larger program, I really recommend that you get the full program at sherlockskills.com

Using this system you could memorize a 100 digit number in 5 minutes, memorize your favorite poem, memorize a list of words for a history test, or ace any test. Now we will show you how to put together your own brain attic, how to store your information, and how to retrieve it.

Who knows, maybe you will even use it to be a crime fighting detective.

Chapter 9 Exercise

1. What have you learned about the Memory Palace?
2. Hypothetically speaking, let's put together two brain attics from identical twins, separated at birth. Each is given the same physical brain structure.
 - One twin is raised in a middle-class family, one that works hard and struggles to make ends meet. They are kind, honest and hard working. They value a good work ethic, learning and education. This twin grows up to become a doctor.
 - The other lives the life of luxury, given all creature comforts money can buy. He treats people according to their economic status, and sees money and power as more important than a formal education. This twin grows up to become CEO of his family business.

How would you see each of their brain attics? They started out with the same brain structure, yet their experiences and surroundings will determine what they store in their brain attic. What things do you see as being stored in each attic? Based on what you see in their attic, which twin do you think would be the smarter? Which would be the more successful? Does money play a part in their brain attic? Do your biases and prejudice have an influence on how you build each brain attic?

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Chapter 10

Clarifying the Memory Palace

Holmes avoided common deductions by not succumbing to predetermined answers. He deliberately went beyond the obvious to think of alternative answers. He once stated to Watson, “When you have eliminated all which is impossible, then whatever remains, however improbable, must be the truth.” By turning his focus to his memory attic he draws information to form his deductions based on facts he observes and gathers himself.

Let me explain the Memory Palace to you in different terms. Could you, right now, walk around your home with all the lights off and still roughly know where the furniture is? Sure you could, but why, because you have unconsciously memorized a map of your home.

Memory Champions all over the world use the Method of Loci, or memory palace, to sort, store and recall more than any other when training. Despite many other forms of memory tools, this has been proven to be the most useful for those who compete and train for memory events.

Basically, the Method of Loci is learning information by placing an image in your mind of certain objects at specific locations. When you want to remember the items on your list you can recall them by pulling the image from the location you placed it in.

For example, in the room you are in right now you could look around and place a number in your mind to five separate objects or pieces of furniture. Maybe you would make number one the table, number 2 the bookshelf, number 3 the window, or whatever. These would be your files.

Here is another way to describe it. Imagine that you go to a friend’s house and you put your coat on a chair. Four hours later it is time to leave. You will go directly to the chair to get your coat. Why, because the chair was holding your coat. It was holding it literally, but also mentally, in your mind. You had tied your coat to that chair mentally.

This is the idea behind the Memory Palace. You want to tie whatever it is that you want to remember to pieces of furniture, and then when you want to retrieve it later you go back to that spot.

This is exactly what Sherlock Holmes did.

Could you recall anything by placing it on a chair mentally?

What if you had 50 chairs in your mind, and you could put something on each of them. You want to go back and get the information as easily and effortlessly as getting your coat before you leave a party.

That's it. That's the Mind Palace.

So incredibly simple - and yet so incredibly effective!

Using this method you could play the Simon memory game, where it flashes a series of lights and you have to repeat the pattern within a certain period of time. You could also remember the pattern of 100 colors in order, or a 100 digit number in five minutes. Sure that's possible, but you can put it to more practical use, like memorizing names, verses, schoolwork, business information, or whatever is important to you.

Now you have a brief overview of what the Sherlock Holmes Memory Palace is, and some possible uses. In the next chapter I will explain to you exactly how to construct your own Sherlock Holmes Memory Palace.

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Chapter 10 Exercise

For this exercise I want you to start out slowly. Make a list of 12 different objects, and using your own home as your mind palace, go around your home and place one item in each room. Then go back and retrieve (in your mind) each object.

Once you have mastered a dozen, then try with more – increasing the number of objects. How did you do?

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Chapter 11

Retrieving Memory From Your Brain Attic

Recalling information comes from your unconscious, and you then bring it forward to your conscious. Although most people think they either have good or bad memory, the fact is, it depends on the subject for most part, and how much you were paying attention at the time.

Some people can be exceptional at remember names and faces, and terrible at remembering phone numbers. Others will be just the opposite. So it may not be your entire memory system that has a problem, but just a portion of it.

Think of something simple, like where you put your keys. Is there a table by the door you put them every time, or do you keep them in your purse or pocket? Is it the same place every day so you don't have to struggle to find them when you need them, or is it just a place they land after you walk in the door?

If your memory system is functioning correctly, you will not have a problem finding your keys. If you've forgotten where they are, one of several things could have happened:

- You never established a pattern as to where to put your keys
- You were thinking about something else when you laid the keys down
- Your short term memory didn't think it was important enough to remember
- You are having difficulty with your memory due to illness, lack of sleep, dehydration, or poor diet.

If you want to stop forgetting where you left your keys, you will have to actually work to make sure that all three stages of the above are working properly.

One problem you may have is simply not concentrating on what you are doing, you lost focus, so your brain did not encode the message to your

memory. If you have not established a pattern of putting the keys in the same place, and you were not concentrating on where you put them, your brain does not convert the message to memory and it is forgotten quickly.

As I said before, staying focused will actually impress the memory into your brain, and repeating the process of putting things in the same place each time creates a pattern that makes it easier to remember and retrieve.

If you've "forgotten" where you put your keys, you may not have actually forgotten at all. The location of your keys may never have ever gotten into your memory in the first place. If you were distracted when you came into the house, and carried them around until you simply discarded them on the nearest place without a conscious thought. Because of this the location was never encoded in your memory.

Distractions are a big reason why information we take in is never encoded to begin with. Take for example an article you are reading while waiting for a plane. There are so many things going on at an airport – children crying or running around, other people talking, announcements for plane boarding, etc. You may think you recalled the details from the article, but it was never effectively saved to your memory.

You may have saved the memory but simply have trouble bringing it back. It's like having something at the tip of your tongue, but you can't bring it back right away – like a movie star's name. You see the face, and hear the voice in your head, and know you know it, but the name simply isn't coming. Later it pops into your head. It could be that the retrieval cues just were not hitting the right cells of the information that was encoded.

Some memory lapses are the result of a illness or permanent memory loss from injury. Diabetics who have trouble controlling their blood sugar could experience a "brain fog," that is only temporary.

Sometimes memory lapse is due to a poor diet, dehydration, or lack of adequate sleep. There are times when memory lapse or inability to retrieve information is a result of outside forces that interfere with retrieval of the

memory. They are common problems that affect even the best of memory experts at one time or another, and no cause for alarm.

Training your brain to be more observant, and paying more attention to what you are doing, can have a big impact on encoding your brain to put data into memory, and makes for easier retrieval.

Chapter 11 Exercise

1. This exercise will strengthen your sense of smell and memory.

Write down five of your favorite smells, then five of your least favorite the smells. Next to each smell write down words you associate with that smell. For example: cinnamon = apple pie; lavender = your grandmother, etc.

As you are writing, recapture the scent each of these fragrances give off. You will be stimulating different areas of your brain and the image will produce the smells in your head, even if you don't actually smell them in front of you, and will bring back these memories.

2. Many of us have gone to the grocery store and returned home to find we had forgotten to pick something up. It's frustrating, is a waste of time (if you have to go back), and is inconvenient – especially if it was something you wanted to use for dinner.

I would like to give you some memory tips on how to memorize your shopping list so you can eliminate that from happening. It is not that difficult, and will be a great help to you in the future – in both time and money.

Let's begin with a list of items:

- eggs
- butter
- bread
- spaghetti sauce
- milk
- spaghetti noodles

- onions
- chicken
- beef
- orange juice
- dish soap
- grapes

Now, take no more than 90 seconds to memorize the list in order. Now look away from the list and try to remember what is on it. Most people will be able to get to about seven, but few can get through the entire list without making at least one mistake.

The key to a good memory is to visualize your list and bring in as many of your senses as possible. The more vivid the picture in your head the easier it is to remember. Also, the funnier you can make it the better your memory will be.

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Chapter 12

5 Steps To Building Your Own Mind Palace

It's time to build your first Sherlock Holmes Memory Palace. Once again, I want to remind you that this course is part of a larger course. If you don't have the larger program I really recommend that you get the full program at sherlockskills.com

Now there are 5 steps to using the Sherlock Memory Palace method. These five steps are:

- 1. Focus**
- 2. File**
- 3. Image**
- 4. Action**
- 5. Review**

I will say those again: Focus, File, Image, Action and Review.

One more time - **focus, file, image, action and review.**

I will walk you through all 5 of these.

We have discussed Focus in Chapter 6.

The #2 key in this memory process is FILE. What is a file? Well in your office you know what it is. It is a cabinet and it has folders and papers inside those folders. Imagine if you took all the files out and threw them on the floor. The papers would still be in the room but without files and scattered it would be next to impossible to find the papers quickly.

It's the same principle with your computer, filing your data keeps them easy to find when you need them. Let's say you didn't have file folders on your

computer, but instead you just threw everything on the desktop of your computer. Every file, picture, movie, document, program or whatever was now on the desktop of your computer. You are looking at 2000 icons and I ask you to find a specific document. It may take hours to find it.

- Your office needs files
- Your computer needs files
- And your brain needs files.

Files are what we talked about before. They are locations in a room. So right now I want to walk you through the process of how to build files to use for your own memory palace.

Here are the guidelines:

1. Let's start with where you live - in other words, a building or home that you are very familiar with.
2. Draw a box on a piece of paper - a box that takes up the entire page.
3. Draw a line down the middle of the box, and a line across, dividing the box into 4 equal sections. Now you have 4 boxes on the page.
4. I want you to imagine that each one of these boxes is a different room in your home. I know the blueprint of your home is not a perfect box, but for the purposes of this exercise this will work.
5. Decide which rooms in your home these boxes will represent. Label them.
6. Draw an X on each box where the doorway is in that room.
7. Once you have decided where the doorway is in each room, then imagine you are in the doorway of each room and going around the room clockwise (or counter clockwise, whichever way makes sense to you) number 5 pieces of furniture.
8. Good examples of furniture to number are desks, beds, TV, stove, microwave, table, lamp, bookshelf, computer, window, shower, sink,

couch or a picture. The idea is to select big items and not small ones.

9. Another good thing to keep in mind is, if you select a bed in one room try not to use a bed in the next. However, if you must, focus on what makes the beds different. For example, in one of your beds maybe you focus on the pillows, and the other you would focus on the wood frame.
10. The logic behind selecting 5 in a room is: if you have 5 in a room and 4 rooms you could easily say what number 15 is by counting by 5s. But, if you have 4 in the first room, 8 in the next, 3 in the next, and 7 in the next, it would be a lot harder to learn the numbers.

So your mission, before you go to the next lesson, is to create these 20 files. I also want you to memorize them before you go to the next lesson. How do you do this? Well, it's pretty simple. Just practice saying them without looking at your paper. Say the number and the furniture. For example #1 is a bed, #2 is a desk, #3 is a mirror - or whatever it is.

Then after you say them forward say them backwards. #20 is table #19 is a lamp or whatever you decide. So say these 20 files forwards and backwards and be able to do it from memory before you continue to the next lesson

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Chapter 13

Building Your List

Alright, at this point you should have 20 files created and be able to say them forwards and backwards. This is the beginning of understanding your memory palace.

Again, the 5 steps to improve your memory are:

FOCUS

FILE

IMAGE

ACTION

REVIEW

Let's focus in on the next step now. It is **image**. Whatever you want to recall it needs to be a picture or an image, something you can see. At one point I held the record for the most numbers memorized in the United States in 5 minutes. I memorized a 167 digit number in 5 minutes. In order to do this I had to have pictures for numbers.

My picture for the #10 is because of 10 fingers. My picture for the #5 is a star because of 5 points on a star. So to remember anything you need to convert it into an image. This is the language of your memory.

For names I do the same thing. Let's say I want to remember the name Steve I think of a stove.

So let's say you want to memorize a list of words, and the first word is hope. You have to create a picture for this, and maybe you think of hop and visualize hopping.

The next step to your memory is **action** - we should also say emotion, so action and emotion. Your brain will naturally recall things that have action and emotion tied to them.

For example, have you ever been in a car accident? If so:

- Were you driving or was someone else?
- Was it day or night?
- Did you wreck into someone or did they wreck into you?
- What area of town were you in?
- Now how many years ago was this?

I bet even if this was 20 years ago you can recall it perfectly, as if it just happened. But if I asked you to describe to me everywhere you drove last week it wouldn't be so easy. Why? The answer is action and emotion. When something has action and emotion it will stay in your memory for decades. Without that it will fade very quickly.

So what this means for us is, when we use our memory palace not only do we need to create images to represent whatever we want to recall, we also have to use action and emotion.

The final step in the memory palace process is **review**.

Many will ask – Is this memory palace for long term or short term memory? The answer is it is for both.

If you just need it for short term, then don't review. However, if this is something that you want to recall long term then you **NEED** to review it.

Let me give you a dramatic example. I am a veteran of the US military, and I served in Afghanistan in 2007. There are over 2,200 members of the US military who paid the ultimate sacrifice in Afghanistan. In order to pay tribute to these men and women I created dozens of memory palaces. I mapped out my house, my mom's house, my friends house, my favorite restaurant, the book store, and several others. After that I had memorized all 2,200 files (yeah I know that's massive and I wouldn't recommend it

unless you have a project you have tremendous passion for. If you do I would recommend getting my full memory course at sherlockskills.com).

Now after I had the 2,200 files, I turned every name and rank into a picture and attached them mentally to my files with action and emotion. But, in order to keep this in long term memory I had to review at least every other day. I would memorize 100, and then the next day review that 100, and then memorize the next 100. The next day I would review 200, and then memorize the next 100. The next day I would review 300, and add another 100. Some days and weeks I would do nothing but review. That is the difference between long term and short term memory.

So again, those are the 5 steps:

- **Focus**
- **File**
- **Image**
- **Action**
- **Review**

Right now you should have 20 files, but before you go to the next lesson I want you to build 25 more files. This means I want you to select five more rooms. These rooms could be in your existing home - where you already used four rooms; or they could be at your school, office, friend's house, or wherever you want.

The important thing to understand is that before you go to the next lesson you need to have 45 files constructed, and be able to say them forwards and backwards.

There is no point going to the next lesson until you can do this, because on the next lesson I will give you a memory test and you will need these 45 files.

So, take some time to do this, construct 25 more files - for a total of 45.

Remember, spread them out around the room, go in a logical order - which means clockwise or counter clockwise, and try to avoid using the same type of furniture more than once.

I will see you on the next lesson, after you have completed this.

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Chapter 14

Memorizing Your List

At this point you should have completed constructing your 45-file Memory Palace. This is exciting for me, and I hope it is for you as well.

We are now going to memorize a list of 45 words. Do not stress out over this. I want you to relax. There is nothing riding on this. You don't get a million dollars if you do it, and no one is going to take away your birthday if you don't.

Plus, this is the first time you have ever done anything like this.

A few tips:

- Review the one before. After you recall whatever you have imagined for #4, go back and review #3. Always review the one before, so whatever you imagine as #15, after you get it in your mind, go back and review #14.
- Involve all your senses. If there is fire, I want you to imagine you feel the heat from the fire. If it is food, imagine yourself tasting the food. See it, hear it, smell it, touch it, taste it and feel it.

Alright, now get relaxed and imagine yourself in the first room. Right now you are thinking of the #1 file. Whatever your #1 file is, get that in your mind.

1. Washing Machine
2. A Dam
3. Chef cooking the sun
4. Medicine
5. Man in a row boat
6. A Dam and Cue Balls
7. Car jack

8. Van on fire
9. Hair
10. Tie
11. Polka dots
12. Tailor
13. Filling up a glass
14. Earring
15. Blue Cannon
16. Beard
17. Ants drawing
18. College Campus
19. Fog, Mist or Haze
20. Garfield the cat
21. Author
22. City of Cleveland
23. Benji, the Walt Disney Dog
24. City of Cleveland
25. Mount McKinley (in Alaska)
26. Roses
27. Raft
28. Wilson tennis ball
29. Hard surface
30. Cooler
31. Vacuum cleaner
32. Roses

- 33. Man telling truth
- 34. Eyeball
- 35. Ken doll (Barbie and Barbie)
- 36. Airplane 'landing'
- 37. Gate with water rushing through it
- 38. Ford truck
- 39. Peanut Butter
- 40. Jelly Beans
- 41. Bushes
- 42. Lint
- 43. Bushes
- 44. Bahamas

Ok....now you have 45 images in your files. I want you to take a deep breath. Review in your mind the last few, and now stop the lesson and go write down as many of these as you can recall.

Remember, if the answer doesn't come to mind right away, skip it and continue. Don't get slowed down with the ones that you don't recall, and don't stress out if you can't remember. There is nothing riding on this. Finish the ones that you do know, and then return to the ones that you initially missed.

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Chapter 15

Answers To Lessons

Before I give you the answers I want to remind you not to be too hard on yourself if you missed one. It is most likely simply because you did not make the action and emotion strong enough.

This is the biggest problem that I see, and can be solved with practice in most cases.

1. Washing Machine
2. A Dam
3. Chef cooking the sun
4. Medicine
5. Man in a row boat
6. A Dam and Cue Balls
7. Car jack
8. Van on fire
9. Hair
10. Tie
11. Polka dots
12. Tailor
13. Filling up a glass
14. Earring
15. Blue Cannon
16. Beard
17. Ants drawing
18. College Campus

19. Fog, Mist or Haze
20. Garfield the cat
21. Author
22. City of Cleveland
23. Benji, the Walt Disney Dog
24. City of Cleveland
25. Mount McKinley (in Alaska)
26. Roses
27. Raft
28. Wilson tennis ball
29. Hard surface
30. Cooler
31. Vacuum cleaner
32. Roses
33. Man telling truth
34. Eyeball
35. Ken doll (Barbie and Barbie)
36. Airplane 'landing'
37. Gate with water rushing through it
38. Ford truck
39. Peanut Butter
40. Jelly Beans
41. Bushes
42. Lint
43. Bushes

44. Bahamas

45. Question Mark

So what do you think we just memorized? Well, we were talking about names so if you guessed 44 names then you are correct! But let's take it one step further, these are important names! They are the names of the 44 Presidents of The United States! Many students will spend days or weeks memorizing the presidents of the United States and you did it in only MINUTES!

Here are the associations:

1. Washing Machine = Washington
2. A Dam = Adams
3. Chef cooking the sun = Jefferson (Chef Sun)
4. Medicine = Madison
5. Man in a row boat = Monroe
6. A Dam and Cue Balls = Q. Adams
7. Car jack = Jackson
8. Van on fire = Van Buren (Van burning)
9. Hair = Harrison
10. Tie = Tyler
11. Polka dots = Polk
12. Tailor = Taylor
13. Filling up a glass more = Fillmore
14. Ear ring = Pierce (ear pierced to get an ear ring)
15. Blue Cannon = Buchanan
16. Beard = Abe Lincoln
17. Ants drawing = Andrew (Johnson)

18. College Campus = Grant (college grant)
19. Fog, mist or Haze = Hayes
20. Garfield the cat = Garfield
21. Author = Arthur
22. City of Cleveland = Cleveland
23. Benji - the Walt Disney Dog = Benjamin (Harrison)
24. City of Cleveland = Cleveland
25. Mount McKinley (in Alaska) = McKinley
26. Roses = Roosevelt
27. Raft = Taft
28. Wilson tennis ball = Wilson
29. Hard surface = Harding
30. Cooler = Coolidge
31. Vacuum cleaner = Hoover
32. Roses = Franklin Roosevelt
33. Man telling truth = Truman
34. Eyeball = Eisenhower
35. Ken doll (Barbie and Barbie) = Kennedy
36. Airplane 'landing' = Lyndon (landing) Johnson
37. Gate with water rushing through it = Nixon (Water Gate)
38. Ford truck = Ford
39. Peanut Butter = Jimmy Carter (His family was in the peanut business)
40. Jelly Beans = Reagan (his favorite candy)
41. Bushes = Bush
42. Lint = Clinton

43. Bushes = Bush

44. Bahamas = Obama

There you have it! The 44 presidents!

I recently timed myself to see how long it would take me to memorize 44 random last names. I couldn't memorize the presidents because I already knew them and that wouldn't give me an accurate measurement. I found it took me 3 minutes and 14 seconds to memorize 44 random last names.

So with this method it is possible to go very fast with practice and even 44 words in 3 minutes and 14 seconds.

There you have it my friends. This is the memory method of Sherlock Holmes, and what is referred to as the mind palace.

Whenever you want to memorize something whether it be a poem, school work, a speech you want to give, quote, business information, numbers or Sherlock Holmes passages, all you need to do is turn the data into images and store it mentally in your mind palace.

As I have mentioned before, I have a larger program, including videos, that this is a part of and you can get it at sherlockskills.com



Chapter 16

Practice, Practice & More Practice

We've all heard the term, "Practice makes perfect." That is no old-wive's tale.

Do you think Sherlock Holmes was born with the ability to look at something and see what other's have not? I realize he's a fictional character, and he probably WAS born in Doyle's mind that way, but in real life anyone who wants to become a thinker like Sherlock Holmes has to learn it, and then hone his skill through repetition. That is how people become masters – in any field.

Remember like a Master Chess Champion

When you think of a master chess player you envision someone who knows the board forward and backward. This person has retained hundreds, perhaps thousands, of different moves in his mind. He is able to retrieve them at a moment's notice, and even able to see several moves ahead of the one he's working on.

Is he able to do this when he sits down to play chess for the first time? No, absolutely not. This knowledge was gained over time, by observing what others have done, and practicing different moves on his own.

According to an article published in *Nature*, scientists at the National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Strokes (NINDS) have been able to identify parts of the brain used by tournament-level chess players in complex problem solving. Studies have shown a networking process that runs throughout the brain, according to Dr. Jordan Grafman and his colleagues. According to Grafman, chess is an "ideal model to help scientists better understand the coordinated work of the brain."

Chess is an excellent brain game, and can enhance memory as well as other brain areas.

“Imagine yourself as a chess player about to checkmate your opponent,” Grafman said in describing the work of the brain. You are bringing forth all your knowledge of strategies, along with past experience to make the next move. You visualize the pieces on the board and then mentally separate the colors and the figures. You analyze their placement on the board, access each piece’s value to your next move, and remember the rules of the game in order to proceed. Skilled players will recognize specific patterns that will help them gain advantage over their opponent. Then you are able to analyze what would happen if you make x move here, or y move there, and what your opponent may do to counter the attack.

Researchers used a brain imaging technique known as “positron emission tomography” (PET), which allowed Grafman and his coworkers to separate each of the steps the players took and identify which part of the brain was used during each stage. The PET scan then recorded the activity using a radioactive tracer when a part of the brain was activated for a certain task.

The colors of the pieces and the places on the board activated parts of both sides of the brain known to process visual information. Retrieval of the rules activates two parts of the left side of the brain that indexes memories, and an area near the left ear associated with memory storage. Making judgment as to how to get checkmate utilizes both sides of the front of the brain that is essential for planning, and the back of the brain that is important for images.

According to Grafman, experiments like the chess study allow scientists to improve our understanding of how humans make judgments. He says the areas in the front of the brain activated in the checkmate judgment stage may be “managerial knowledge units,” which are similar to other types of storage in the brain, but they coordinate a large amount of information in a specific sequence. Grafman says the findings in this study will “ultimately be useful in helping people recovering from brain injuries or diseases that affect problem solving and judgment.”

Sherlock Holmes utilizes his mind much like a chess player – studying the board, analyzing the next move, and seeing what lies ahead.

We First Learned Through Repetition

As an adult you go over the same lessons and skills again and again that you did as a child. The more you do an activity the more it remains ingrained in your memory throughout your lifetime.

Simple traditions you learned from your grandparents and are now passing on to your children or grandchildren - the smells of your house at Christmas, with the house each year smelling like apple pumpkin pies; the way you tie your shoes, and teaching your children to make the “bunny loops” - these are all things you learned and repeat – traditions that hold up now and you pass along. These lessons stay in your long-term memory so you can repeat them again and again.

When you repeat a lesson you are allowing your brain to form new synapses (connections) to your brain cells, and this transition allows your short-term memory to pass the lesson along to long-term memory. It also makes it easier for the brain to recall information when it is needed.

In my memory training courses I stress **repetition** as one of the keys to improving your memory. It reinforces the lesson in your brain and the more you repeat it the better you will remember. Once committed to memory it is not likely to be lost, even if that information is not utilized again for years.

Once example: I enjoy playing trivia games. It allows you to recall information you may have committed to long-term memory, but have long forgotten. It also gets your brain working to produce new brain cell connections, and we all could use some additional ones of those!

The original lessons learned as children are often the foundation and building blocks for other lessons. It was probably through repetition that it became ingrained in your brain, and now by using that lesson as we grow up we are able to access it easier and easier.

When I was a child we would help my mother with the dinner dishes and we would go over our spelling lists. To this day I recall having trouble with the word “something” when I was in second or third grade. We would go over it and over it, and finally I got it right and could continue to remember it correctly.

You can remember names and faces easier if you repeat the name back to the person you are being introduced to. That, along with other memory techniques will reinforce the person’s name and face in your mind and you can repeat it in your head over and over to commit it to memory.

Numbers, names and faces are more easily recalled by repeating them. If you can develop a pattern for remembering names and faces, you can draw upon that same pattern over and over again as a memory training technique.

Research done at the University of Texas at Austin was the first time scientists had studied the activity levels of large brain regions. With the use of a functional MRI (fMRI) machine they searched for patterns of activity across all aspects of the brain. Different studies have shown that by mapping the activity of different areas of the brain – such as for reading, language, crafts, etc. strengthens the brain. Since it is now known that we use all areas of our brain, and not just one area at a time, for different functions we continue to make new brain cells and new neural connections. They also were able to know for certain that memories created and reinforced through repetition were stronger.

Envision the World Differently Than Most

Experts, according to noted Psychologist K. Anders Ericsson, see the world in an entirely different way. They are honed in on what they are expert at, sometimes even to the exclusion of others around them. It’s like a laser pointer, and they can see the flaws within their parameters because they know the subject so well. They see the patterns, irregularities, and things out of place – and they do it almost immediately.

This is how Sherlock Holmes is able to solve a case. He dismisses the obvious and hones in on that which is out of place or unusual – what is there that shouldn't be, or what isn't there that should? He takes his system – the memory palace, and made it work for him, become part of him.

Where most people normally would react, and work from an emotional standpoint, Holmes pushes reaction aside and replaced it with reflective thought. As he would often say to Watson, he made it a habit to consciously use his system at all times, eliminating the emotional aspect of his nature and replacing it with unemotional reasoning.

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Chapter 17

Memory Tips to Help You

Whether you are aiming to become a Memory Champion, a detective like Sherlock Holmes, or simply trying to remember the little things that seem to slip through your memory cracks, what we have here are some final tips to help you focus and stay on track.

1. **Think Positive!** Maybe your memory isn't what it used to be, but that doesn't mean it can't be. There is truth to the "Power of Positive Thinking" attitude. Take every little achievement as motivation to keep going.
2. **Do Brain Exercises.** As we age our brain connections also age and die off. By regular brain exercise you can develop new connections that will keep your mind clicking on all cylinders. These exercises could include learning a new language, playing a musical instrument, or doing puzzles and word games like "Sudoku." Keep your brain active by providing it with fun challenges.
3. **Regular Exercises.** When your blood circulates properly throughout your body it also circulates through your brain, providing it with sufficient oxygen to improve your memory.
4. **De-stress.** When you are under stress you have a hard time thinking clearly. Under prolonged periods of stress your hypothalamus tells your pituitary gland to release hormones that can weaken the memory center in your brain (hippocampus). Learn meditation and deep breathing exercises to help you relax.
5. **Get Proper Nutrition.** A healthy diet leads to a healthy brain. A diet rich in "brain foods" like Omega 3 fatty acid, (fish oil), and antioxidants (broccoli, blueberries, spinach, and berries) promote healthy brain function. Eating 5-6 small meals a day (grazing) instead of 3 large ones seems to improve your memory by leveling your sugar. And, if you are not certain you are getting the right vitamins, take supplements like Thiamine, Vitamin E, Niacin and Vitamin B-6 for improved brain function. Eliminate as much sugar

as you can, because it can give you a temporary lift, but a quick brain drain. And - don't forget to drink plenty of water!

6. **Practice Remembering Names and Faces.** Get out old photo albums and try to concentrate on the people you grew up with, and family members who may have passed on. This will click some memories in your brain of happier times, and happy is a good way to open up your brain as well as bring back old memories. Look carefully at the photos and try to bring back details. Remembering names and faces is a great memory improvement exercise. We tend to forget more because we were observant to start with.
7. **Focus.** Forming a memory is much more difficult if you are distracted. Force yourself to center on what you are trying to remember and eliminate what is going on around you.
8. **Practice Mnemonics.** Human beings are visual, and we associate pictures with words. "You remember information more easily if you can visualize it. If you want to associate a child with a book, try not to visualize the child reading the book – that's too simple and forgettable. Instead, come up with something more jarring, something that sticks, like the book chasing the child, or the child eating the book. It's your mind – make the images as shocking and emotional as possible to keep the associations strong."
9. **Repeat.** When you want to remember something you need to repeat it or write it down. The more you repeat, the more you'll remember.
10. **Group Things Together.** It's easier to remember things when you put them into groups. Example: When you make a grocery list, group all the vegetables together; the dairy; etc. - group things according to where they are located in the store. It's much easier to remember what you are looking for this way than if you just have a random list.
11. **Get Organized.** "A place for everything and everything in its place," is a common phrase. The more organized you are the easier

it will be to find things, and the better able you are to concentrate on more important things.

12. **Get Plenty of Sleep.** According to studies conducted at Harvard Medical School, “Getting a good night’s sleep – a minimum of seven hours a night – may improve your short-term memory and long-term relational memory.” The amount of sleep we get affects the brain’s memorizing ability.

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Chapter 18

Build and Grow

There you have it my friends. This is the memory method of Sherlock Holmes and what is referred to as the mind palace, the memory palace, the brain attic, and the Method of Loci. I have given you the tools to build your own mind palace, and improve your memory, so now it's up to you to build and grow.

Whenever you want to memorize something - whether it be a grocery list, school work, or a speech, a quote, business information, numbers, or Sherlock Holmes passages - all you need to do is turn the data into images and store it mentally in your mind palace.

Once you have mastered this technique, and practiced it as often as possible, you will want to use this method A LOT. You may even want to share it with your friends, or use it in social situations. The sky's the limit when you open your mind to new and efficient ways to use it.

As I have mentioned before, I have a larger program that this is a part of and you can get it at sherlockskills.com. If you don't have the larger program, I highly recommend that you get it.

That program will enable you to improve your life in all areas. You will be able to memorize names and faces; memorize chapters of books; learn foreign languages; give speeches without staring at notes; recall verses; or whatever you want. It can be an invaluable tool.

I promise you that you can do these things with practice, and I look forward to hearing about your success.

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Chapter 19

Chapter Exercises

Answers to Chapter 1 Exercise:

For each “no” answer to questions 3-13 give yourself 1 point (maximum 11 points)

For each blank you filled in from questions 14-19, give yourself 1 point (maximum 21 points)

If you scored:

28-32 Excellent! Your memory is better than average and you have no memory problem

22-27 Good, but pay more attention and focus on what you are doing. Some memory exercises or work with a memory expert could help.

15-21 Fair. Your memory is not as strong as it could be, but could be improved with memory training and brain exercises.

0-14 Consider speaking with your doctor.

Answers to Chapter 2 Exercise:

1. Arthur Ignatious Conan Doyle
2. Altamont
3. Stoneyhurst
4. University of Edinburgh Medical School
5. *A Study in Scarlet*
6. John
7. Reichenbach Falls
8. Mayumba

9. Spiritualism

10. Dr. Joseph Bell

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Chapter 20

Resources

- *The Deduction Guide*, by Louise Blackwood
- *Arthur Conan Doyle Biography*, Bio.com
<http://www.biography.com/people/arthur-conan-doyle-9278600>
- *The Red House Mystery* – A.A. Milne
- Wikipedia – Sherlock Holmes,
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sherlock_Holmes
- *Mastermind - How to Think Like Sherlock Holmes*, by Maria Konnikova
- *A Study in the Appeal and Reception of the Sherlock Holmes Stories* -
<http://www.sff.net/people/mithrandir/NewDoyle.htm>.
- Sherlockian.Net: Societies and fandom,
<http://www.sherlockian.net/societies/>.
- Scientific American, “Does Photographic Memory Exist?” Dec. 19, 2012 by Barry Gordon (<http://www.scientificamerican.com/article/i-developed-what-appears-to-be-a-ph/>.)
- Sherlockian - Sherlock.com - <http://www.sherlockian-sherlock.com/dr-joseph-bell-the-real-sherlock-holmes.php>.
- *Irish Examiner, Fiction Imitates Real Life In A Case Of True Inspiration*, November 4, 2011;
<http://www.irishexaminer.com/viewpoints/analysis/fiction-imitates-real-life-in-a-case-of-true-inspiration-172752.html>.
- *How To think Like Sherlock*, by Daniel Smith
- PC World – *Does Twitter Zap Your Memory?*
http://www.pcworld.com/article/171884/does_twitter_zap_your_memory.html.
- NY Times – *Internet Use Affects memory, Study Finds*:
http://www.nytimes.com/2011/07/15/health/15memory.html?_r=1.
- *The Memory Book*, by Harry Lorayne & Jerry Lucas
- Science Daily – *Major Step Forward In Understanding How Memory Works*:
<http://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2008/04/080423121427.htm>
- Wikipedia – Recognition memory:
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Recognition_memory

- WebMD – *Top Concentration Killers*:
http://www.webmd.com/addadhd/ss/slideshow-top-concentration-killers?ecd=wnl_lbt_020112
- *Better Medicine from HealthGrades – Concentration Difficulty*:
<http://www.bettermedicine.com/article/concentration-difficulty>
- *How Things Work – Memory Retrieval*:
<http://science.howstuffworks.com/environmental/life/human-biology/human-memory3.htm>
- *Discovery Fit & Health – Testing Your Memory*:
<http://health.howstuffworks.com/human-body/systems/nervous-system/how-to-test-your-memory.htm>
- *Tools for Abundance – Improve Your Memory*: <http://www.tools-for-abundance.com/memory.html>
- *Mind Tools – The Journey System*:
http://www.mindtools.com/pages/article/newTIM_05.htm
- *More Intelligent Life – How To Cheat At Everything*:
<http://moreintelligentlife.com/story/how-to-cheat-at-everything>
- *MindTools – Improve Your Concentration*:
http://www.mindtools.com/pages/article/newHTE_78.htm#np
- Mental Fitness Cards, by Marge Engleman (97-100)
- Welcome Trust - *Mapping Memories: Eleanor Maguire and Brain Mapping*:
<http://www.welcome.ac.uk/News/2011/Features/WTVM052016.htm>
- Oracle Think Press – *Cognitive Processes*
- Wikipedia: - Sensory Memory:
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sensory_memory
- Ask.com - 10 Ways Psychology Can Improve Your Life:
<http://psychology.about.com/od/psychology101/tp/applying-psychology.htm>
- The PhantomWriters.com – *Good Memory Equals Greater Success*:
http://thephantomwriters.com/free_content/db/j/good-memory-equals-success.shtml
- Fisher Price: How Memory Develops: <http://www.fisher-price.com/fp.aspx?st=10&e=expertadvice&content=36350>
- Memory Process Takes Years to Fully Develop:
http://www.nytimes.com/2011/09/06/science/06memory.html?_r=1

- Memoryzine.com - Memory Training: The New Approach:
<http://memoryzine.com/informal-care-givers-are-you-dealing-with-the-memory-impaired/memory-training-the-new-approach-from-pmi/#comment-482>
- Curiosity.com – How Complex Is Memory?
<http://curiosity.discovery.com/question/how-complex-is-memory>
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<http://mitpress.mit.edu/catalog/item/default.asp?tld=9081&tttype=2>
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<http://www.livescience.com/5327-music-memory-connection-brain.html>
- John Hopkins Magazine – Exploring the Link Between Art and Memory: <http://magazine.jhu.edu/2011/11/exploring-the-link-between-art-and-memory/>
- Memoryzine.com - *Attention Skills Are Key to Multitasking and Memory* – Memoryzone.com
- Life's Little Mysteries: 6 Fun Ways to Sharpen Your Memory:
<http://www.lifeslittlemysteries.com/2039-6-fun-ways-sharpen-memory.html>
- Ezine Articles –Photographic Memory Training: Could It Be That Simple? by Allison Benjamin: <http://ezinearticles.com/?Photographic-Memory-Training:-Could-It-Be-That-Simple?&id=6705656>
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- The Curious Blog of Joe Riggs – Mentalist and Consultant:
<http://theworldofjoeriggs.com/blog/2012/06/mentalist-insight-fastest-ways-to-detect-deception-like-sherlock-holmes/>
- Wikipedia – Professor Moriarty -
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Professor_Moriarty

- TheNorwoodBuilder -
<http://thenorwoodbuilder.tumblr.com/post/54939209642/the-stage-lost-a-fine-actor-sherlock-holmes>
- Inspectorinsight: Lessons From The Master of Deduction -
<http://www.inspectorinsight.com/insight/lessons-from-the-master-of-deduction/>

This book is part of a larger program on *How To Think and Memorize Like Sherlock*. For videos and more information, visit us at sherlockskills.com



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