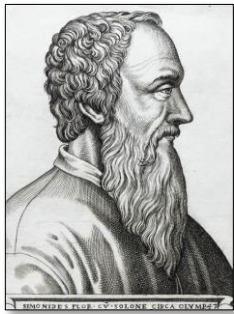


Method of Loci

RENEWING TECHNIQUE

There's a part of your brain near the core called the hippocampus. This area is involved in many different functions, including the storing or retrieving of memories and spatial relationships.

Have you ever visited somewhere new but suddenly had a feeling you had been there before? That's because your hippocampus is incorrectly associating a memory and a place. We call this feeling, *deja'vu*, French for "already seen." Various things can cause *deja'vu* but almost everyone has experienced it.



The ancient Greek poet, Simonides, developed a memorization technique called the "Method of Loci." (*Loci* means "places" in Latin.) Some people today call this technique the "Mind Palace." The technique became popular during the Greek and Roman periods and was still in use during the Renaissance in Europe. People used this method to memorize long speeches and vast quantities of facts, even though they had no idea why it worked,

As we said, the hippocampus has multiple functions but forming memories and spatial reasoning are two of the most important. We now know the Mind Palace technique works by intentionally networking these brain functions together.

Here's an example of a Mind Palace I created to help memorize the fruit of the Spirit listed in Galatians 5:22 and 23. The verse lists nine fruit: Love, Joy Peace, Longsuffering, Gentleness, Goodness, Faith, Meekness, and Self-control. The first part of the technique is to form a mental image representing each of the items. Here are drawings of the mental images I made...



Some of these pictures may take some explanation. The heart is **Love**, but the little boy is happy and jumping, so he is **Joy**. Obviously, the hippy is **Peace**. The weary old man is **Longsuffering**, and the two hands are holding the little bird with **Gentleness**. The lady in our apartment is sweeping off her deck, which she doesn't have to do but she does because of the **Goodness** of her heart. The people of the Star of David have always shown their **Faith** by praying. Dorothy from the Wizard of Oz

Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind.

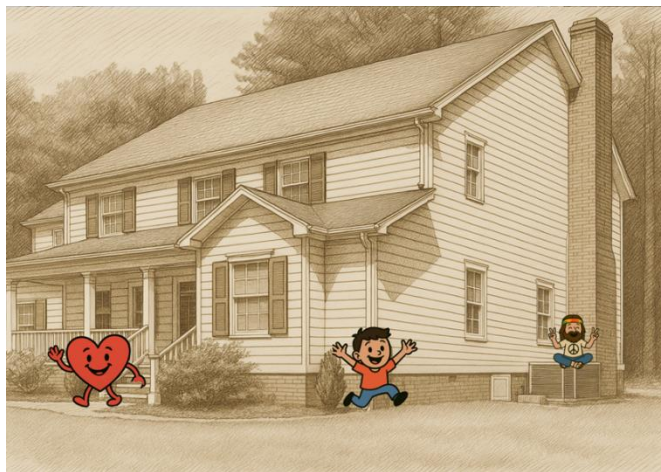
Romans 12:2

is **Meekness** because she told the Wizard she was “Meek and mild.” And the thermostat does a great job of **Self-Control**.

The hippocampus stores these mental images and the words or concepts they represent as you create them. It does even a better job if the images are wacky or bizarre. The praying Star of David is an example. And don’t try to imagine complex pictures. Simple cartoon-like images help focus the memory on the associated word you want to remember instead of it getting lost in meaningless details.



Once your images are ready, it’s time to start building the Mind Palace. The Palace should be some place, either now or in the past, that you are very familiar with, like your childhood home or your current neighborhood. Those are spatial memories that are already stored by your hippocampus. Your task now is to associate your new mental images with those specific places you already know.



Your places might be individual rooms in a familiar building but I used the perimeter of my house. I started at the front stairs where I placed the heart. Then I mentally walked around the outside of my house, placing Joy at the corner, Peace on the AC units, Longsuffering was around the corner under the deck, and so on.

Rehearse your mental images as you imagine walking around your Mind Palace. After just a few tries, you’ll be

able to remember your list, backwards and forwards, and at any starting point.

I used to see cobwebs around the eaves when I walked around the outside of my house. Now I see those silly images and remember the spiritual fruit God wants to see in my life. The Method of Loci is a proven tool to help us renew the original capacity of our minds.