



Carved in Sand: When Attention Fails and Memory Fades in Midlife

Cathryn Jakobson Ramin

[Download now](#)

[Read Online](#) 

Carved in Sand: When Attention Fails and Memory Fades in Midlife

Cathryn Jakobson Ramin

Carved in Sand: When Attention Fails and Memory Fades in Midlife Cathryn Jakobson Ramin

Why can't you remember where you put your keys? Or the title of the movie you saw last week? Or the name of your favorite restaurant?

Acclaimed journalist Cathryn Jakobson Ramin takes readers on a lively journey to explain what happens to memory and attention in middle age. Along the way, she turns up fresh scientific findings, explores the dark regions of the human brain, and hears the intimate confessions of high-functioning midlife adults who—like you—want to understand exactly what's going on upstairs.

Anyone older than forty knows that forgetfulness can be unnerving, frustrating, and sometimes terrifying. With compassion and humor, Jakobson Ramin sets out to discover what midlife forgetfulness is all about—from the perspectives of physiology, psychology, and sociology. Relentless in her search for answers to questions about her own unreliable memory, she explores the factors that determine how well—or poorly—one's brain will age. She consults experts in the fields of sleep, stress, traumatic brain injury, hormones, genetics, and dementia, as well as specialists in nutrition, cognitive psychology, and the burgeoning field of drug-based cognitive enhancement. The landscape of the midlife brain is not what you might think, and to understand its strengths and weaknesses turns out to be the best way to cope.

Jakobson Ramin's reporting of the stories of a wide array of midlife men and women will resonate with readers. Her audience will glean spectacular insight into how to elicit the very best performance from a middle-aged brain. A groundbreaking work that represents the best of narrative nonfiction, this is a timely, highly readable, and much-needed book for anyone whose memory is not what it used to be.

Carved in Sand: When Attention Fails and Memory Fades in Midlife Details

Date : Published April 3rd 2007 by Harper

ISBN : 9780060598693

Author : Cathryn Jakobson Ramin

Format : Hardcover 336 pages

Genre : Nonfiction, Science, Psychology, Health

 [Download Carved in Sand: When Attention Fails and Memory Fades i ...pdf](#)

 [Read Online Carved in Sand: When Attention Fails and Memory Fades ...pdf](#)

Download and Read Free Online Carved in Sand: When Attention Fails and Memory Fades in Midlife
Cathryn Jakobson Ramin

From Reader Review Carved in Sand: When Attention Fails and Memory Fades in Midlife for online ebook

M. Patrick says

Carved in Sand is an encyclopedia of what can happen to your cognitive faculties as you go from middle age to senior status. It explains all the types of mental impairments and what causes them. It discusses in detail 15 interventions that people can try to maintain their mental acuity into their senior years. Anyone who feels threatened by their own absentmindedness or inability to retrieve names and pertinent information that once was remembered easily should read this book. It will offer some remedies that some have tried, but most important it will help readers understand the causes and come to terms with where they are with respect to their cognitive ability.

Glen says

This was a great book that describes the author's journey dealing with her declining middle age memory problems. It is greatly readable and dishes out a lot of science in easily digestible and unintimidating ways. Those of us in middle age can easily relate to her non-Alzheimer's memory issues and the angst and frustration they engender. She chronicles her own journey through various interventions, some spot on and others a little suspicious, and explains the science behind how they work. I highly recommend this book for anyone who might be dealing with middle age memory issues themselves or dealing with them in a spouse or other loved one.

Kris says

Well, the good news is that I'm not going to worry so much about my occasional memory lapses. Apparently this affects many if not most people "in midlife". The bad news, such as it is, is that it is more or less inevitable. But staying active, both mentally and physically, is the way to lessen the effects, and I try to do both.

A very interesting book which goes into some detail about the physical and neurological changes that come with memory loss, along with possible causes. Occasionally there's a bit too much technical detail, but I thought the author did a very thorough job of researching and making the results readable.

Literary Soirée says

I picked up this incredibly helpful book when I started losing my memory, to see if in fact this was a normal part of aging rather than my losing my marbles. I found that my marbles are intact, that memory glitches do come with aging, and to look at when those glitches might be the sign of something worse. Highly recommended!

Will Byrnes says

Ramin covers a wide swath of possibilities looking into why memory fails, and seeks solutions to each of the problem areas. It is very interesting reading. I felt at a loss at times in trying to follow the science. I was never much of a bio whiz. But it does appear that there are least understandable causes for much loss of mental capacity, and there might be ways to address most of those. Still, it might have been a nice thing to have had a chapter summarizing the gathered information, in tabular form with the causes on the left and the solutions, or at least ameliorative attempts on the right. As it is, I expect to be referring back to this book for some time, if I can remember where I put it.

Dawn says

First of all, there is no THIS ANSWER WILL FIX EVERYTHING solution in this book.

What the book does do, is arm you with some knowledge about the many and complex reasons your over-40 brain can't remember everything in crisp detail and wanders off in the middle of things like a four-year-old instead of concentrating on the task at hand.

The author walks you through all the strategies she explored for herself, and some she didn't need. I learned, as always, conventional wisdom is bullshit, a great many doctors tend to get in a rut and not care, and there is always someone out there just in it for the money.

I know now that to protect my brain, I'm doing some things right: I'm do cardio 3-4 hours a week. I'm eating better than I ever have, and I'm stopping the insulin rollercoaster by eliminating most grains from my diet. (This author recommends whole grains; everything else I'm reading says they're WORSE than refined for insulin response.)

I'll always have to compensate for the concussions I had as a teenager. The effects didn't show up when I was younger, but the damage is showing now. That was a revelation from the book.

In the meantime, I have to challenge myself mentally and socially (the latter is hard for an introvert, but I'll try).

If you're struggling to remember names, you're missing your keys every day, and you can't focus long enough to do something, and you're over 40, you might not be getting early Alzheimer's. But don't let your doctor brush you off if you think you are. There are ways to check into it. The earlier you know, the more you can do to stave it off.

Betsie Bush says

This is the best book I've listened to all year! Not only is extremely relevant to my life right now, but also because it is well written with a lot of subtle humor and as well as being extremely well researched. I love it when journalists write books about issues in their own lives (especially when the issues are interest me =)

Carter says

As a newly minted 48 year old man, I had my concerns. A little too much of my time these days was spent obsessing over "why couldn't I remember that?" and "Why is it so hard for me to learn this new thing?" I then coupled those feelings with "Oh my, am I slipping? Is there something very wrong with me?". This book really helped. The first thing it did was to reassure me that what I was going through was completely normal. Then it went through a very unscientific journey on how to deal with it. It was a wonderfully practical approach. Long story short, there are very real and very unavoidable cognitive challenges ~everyone~ will go through in mid-life. However, there are things that we can do to make the most of what we have. This book will help you get there.

One other note, there are ~tons~ of books on "How to sharpen your mind" and "How to remember everything." This is not one of those books. This book will not tell you exactly what you need to do to bring by brain back to the place it was when you were 25. That's just not possible. However, this book reassure you and give you a toolbox to work with what you have. That was really refreshing for me.

Mark Isero says

I enjoyed this book by Ms. Ramin, who takes the reader on a journey of several interventions to combat her midlife memory loss. She writes well and offers several excellent suggestions to improve memory, including changing our diet, exercising, taking supplements, and engaging the mind. As the book progressed, however, it switched for me from a book of journalism to a self-help book. By the end, it seems like Ms. Ramin was content to conclude: We don't really know what works, but here's a list, and do your best. Her main message, though -- to do something about memory lapses, rather than nothing -- was a strong one.

Dan says

I found this book to be very frustrating. This book was recommended to me by a friend after we discussed the fact that both of us have close relatives with Alzheimer's. My frustration is summed up by Ms. Ramin in the beginning of her final chapter, "I know what you're thinking. You're trying to decide which interventions might work for you....People ask me all the time if I'm 'better,' and honestly, I can say that I am....Although it would be immensely satisfying to tell you which of the ten interventions did the trick, I can't....I knew that the flaws in my 'make myself a guinea pig' protocols, would muddy my results."

In the book she describes that she learned contradictory opinions about some of the interventions she used. As a journalist she had free access that you or I would have to pay a lot of money for and free access to the top names in the field. Her experiences let us know some of the things that may be possible, but we don't learn what works and what doesn't and some of her interventions are not even available to most of us.

Tara says

I found this book to be very informative about the different causes of memory loss and the different interventions that can help stave off steep declines in memory and cognitive functioning. There is comfort and concern on every page. This book is relevant for a lot of people who may be feeling a little or a lot disorganized or people who want to be on the alert for those behaviors that contribute to memory loss.

A scary fact of life is that when people start feeling like they are losing capacity, they often pass a simple memory test administered by their doctors. Doctors often dismiss people's reports of memory impairment as stress, anxiety or depression. This leads people to forgo early interventions that might prevent or reverse their decline.

The author does a good job at illustrating the role of the hippocampus in cognitive functioning and the many things that can interfere with the structure and function of the hippocampus.

Robert says

Many faceted look at the things that make our brains and memory deteriorate and what might be done about it. No single silver bullets, but enough ammunition that anyone might be able to cope a little better, for a little longer.

Dorothy Greco says

Super helpful book for those of us in middle (or past the middle) of life who struggle to remember how to spell words, where we put our keys, or what the hell we were just talking about 5 minutes ago. Well researched and thorough. (If not a bit scary.)

jen says

Those interested in an in-depth look at memory and cognitive neuroscience will likely be disappointed in this book, despite its non-self-help approach. The author covers a wide range of reasons for memory loss, and embarks on experiments trying different treatments to improve her memory. Unfortunately she jumps from one to the other and pretty much dismisses most of them without really trying. And her experience is not very realistic or practical for most people, who will not have the access to all of the specialists the author meets with (many, obviously, make time for her because she is writing the book), or be able to travel to specialists in other states for treatment. The chapter preceding the conclusion discusses the most likely actions that many people can do to prevent memory issues: keep the brain active by learning new and challenging skills, get regular aerobic exercise, and have regular social interactions. These ideas are consistent with other studies of memory, but yet you don't really get the idea that the author will be focusing on these to improve her memory. In the end, the author says her memory has improved but that she does not really know which treatments were responsible.

Elizabeth says

I don't think I've ever said this about a book before but I think everyone should read it. The author takes a journey through various diagnoses and, as she calls them, interventions to help her with short term memory and concentration problems and with chronic sleeplessness. The information she provides is overwhelming and the only request I would make is for her to create a cheat sheet at the end so that people experiencing these common problems could follow in her footsteps or work with doctors to diagnose their particular root cause. Although I also recommend this book for those who do not have memory problems because someone

in their life probably does.
