Cody: [00:01](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/yYeX3TtVS-MWPmqbiiiQUWbId28Zp1Iqn7AH5XsNl-jEJUwqjfw0fvdj5ttfg2txIRdUyYICdRqgRhkXkBiHXqYOeQk?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1.8) This is Cody McLain from the mind hack podcast, a place where we explore the routines, mindset, and experiences of successful people in their field, whatever that field may be. Today we're looking at the world of memory, something we all seemingly neglect and fall back into this fixed mindset of believing we just have bad memories. You know, I've nearly always thought of myself as having the worst memory because I'd never be able to remember conversations, people's names or other seemingly in sequential things from our past. And I know what you're thinking. This Nelson thought he's A Rain man, right? Well, I can assure you he is not. He is just an average Joe who's taken up a skill of memorization. It's a technique that dates back thousands of years and in this conversation you too can learn how to improve your memory with simple techniques that you can practice anywhere, whether you're standing in line at the grocery store or even when you're stuck in rush hour traffic.

Cody: [01:06](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/yYeX3TtVS-MWPmqbiiiQUWbId28Zp1Iqn7AH5XsNl-jEJUwqjfw0fvdj5ttfg2txIRdUyYICdRqgRhkXkBiHXqYOeQk?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=66.03) But with me here today is somebody special. His name is Nelson Dellis and he is a four time world memory championships and has the u s memory records for memorizing the most names and words in 15 minutes. That's 217 names and 256 words as well as memorizing 907 digits in 30 minutes and memorizing the most decks of playing cards in 30 minutes at 9.02 decks. Nelson is also the published author of the book, remember it, a book about his research into memory theory and improvement. Now I read his book prior to this interview and I have to say it is one of the best, most engaging books I've read in recent times in this interview. Nelson not only comes across as a great person, but also a fantastic writer. He even had doctor Sanjay Gupta write the intro for his book and he's personally made many public appearances on places like the today show.

Cody: [02:09](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/yYeX3TtVS-MWPmqbiiiQUWbId28Zp1Iqn7AH5XsNl-jEJUwqjfw0fvdj5ttfg2txIRdUyYICdRqgRhkXkBiHXqYOeQk?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=129.48) Katie Couric show CNN ABC in much more. Lastly, he's the cofounder of the Memory League, a free online community and championship. And if that's not enough, he's also an avid climber and has made three attempts to reach the summit of Mount Everest. He does so in an attempt to raise money and awareness for Alzheimer's through his foundation called climb for memory with his short bio side. This is an interesting conversation where we discussed how he not only discovered the world of memory, but as well as some of the specific techniques you can pick up and start using pretty much instantly. You'll even hear how he used his memory to cover the tab of a $600 restaurant bill. So if you've ever thought you had a bad memory, this episode is going to flip your world upside down because anybody truly anybody can drastically improve their ability to remember things with the right attitude and technique. So without further ado, here is Nelson. Dallas. Thank you Nelson. I'd like to introduce you to the Mindhack podcast. I'm Cody. I am really excited to have you here at Nelson. Thank you for being here.

Nelson: [03:46](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/yYeX3TtVS-MWPmqbiiiQUWbId28Zp1Iqn7AH5XsNl-jEJUwqjfw0fvdj5ttfg2txIRdUyYICdRqgRhkXkBiHXqYOeQk?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=226.64) Yeah, have to be on the show. Thanks as well for having me on here.

Cody: [03:51](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/yYeX3TtVS-MWPmqbiiiQUWbId28Zp1Iqn7AH5XsNl-jEJUwqjfw0fvdj5ttfg2txIRdUyYICdRqgRhkXkBiHXqYOeQk?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=231.66) Yeah. And Nelson, I'm curious, can you tell myself and the audience perhaps a little bit about yourself?

Nelson: [03:57](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/yYeX3TtVS-MWPmqbiiiQUWbId28Zp1Iqn7AH5XsNl-jEJUwqjfw0fvdj5ttfg2txIRdUyYICdRqgRhkXkBiHXqYOeQk?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=237.9) Sure. So my name's Nelson. I, um, actually was born with an average memory, believe it or not, and it's something that I've, in the past 10 years worked on and really made my life's work and turned it into a business and had a lot of success in competitions and sending records and things like that. And now I can proudly say that I'm, you know, for time us memory champion and grand master a memory and a memory coach.

Cody: [04:28](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/yYeX3TtVS-MWPmqbiiiQUWbId28Zp1Iqn7AH5XsNl-jEJUwqjfw0fvdj5ttfg2txIRdUyYICdRqgRhkXkBiHXqYOeQk?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=268.18) Hmm. Now I was reading your book prior to us having this conversation and I just have to say it was very eye opening in terms of all the techniques and really it just comes down to having a visual image right. Of visualizing what we're looking at in order to remember it. Okay.

Nelson: [04:47](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/yYeX3TtVS-MWPmqbiiiQUWbId28Zp1Iqn7AH5XsNl-jEJUwqjfw0fvdj5ttfg2txIRdUyYICdRqgRhkXkBiHXqYOeQk?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=287.19) Yeah. Yeah, that's exactly it. It's, it's the problem with information these days is that it's in a form that isn't very interesting to most of us. And especially in a day and age when it's very hard to capture our attentions because so much is coming at us. Um, that makes things even more so a memorable. So if you can turn it into one of these pictures that actually has a lot of emotion and interest to you, then you can make it a lot more memorable that way.

Cody: [05:16](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/yYeX3TtVS-MWPmqbiiiQUWbId28Zp1Iqn7AH5XsNl-jEJUwqjfw0fvdj5ttfg2txIRdUyYICdRqgRhkXkBiHXqYOeQk?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=316.8) Right. And you documented techniques such as the, the memory palace or you call it the memory journey, I believe. Yeah. And I'm curious, can you tell me about one technique that would be so very simple for us to implement about any memory technique?

Nelson: [05:34](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/yYeX3TtVS-MWPmqbiiiQUWbId28Zp1Iqn7AH5XsNl-jEJUwqjfw0fvdj5ttfg2txIRdUyYICdRqgRhkXkBiHXqYOeQk?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=334.03) So memory palace is, is kind of the most powerful, I think in my, my mind. But it does take a little bit of a mouthful to explain how to work it. So a lot simpler. We can just talk about kind of the basic idea is that whenever you want to memorize something, the best way to do it is to think of the thing you're memorizing in terms of picture that you can put in your mind's eye as soon as we, that uh, you're

Nelson: [05:58](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/yYeX3TtVS-MWPmqbiiiQUWbId28Zp1Iqn7AH5XsNl-jEJUwqjfw0fvdj5ttfg2txIRdUyYICdRqgRhkXkBiHXqYOeQk?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=358.01) taking advantage of something that our brains are naturally good at, which is thinking in pictures. They were designed for that they were not designed for abstract concepts or numbers, symbols, things like that. So the first thing you want to do is whenever you're encountered with something that you want to memorize is try to see it as something that's silly or bizarre over the top of that you can picture in your mind.

Cody: [06:22](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/yYeX3TtVS-MWPmqbiiiQUWbId28Zp1Iqn7AH5XsNl-jEJUwqjfw0fvdj5ttfg2txIRdUyYICdRqgRhkXkBiHXqYOeQk?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=382.61) Right now, I've, I've used this technique to remember to lock my door because there's, there's been times, especially where I travel and I'll have this anxiety of like, oh, did I locked my door? And one thing I've done is I'll, I will lock it, but then consciously say, pink rabbit, elephant Floyd, Mendham circus. And I would just say something completely bizarre and chaotic. That new will stick in my memory that I will know I had locked the door.

Nelson: [06:52](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/yYeX3TtVS-MWPmqbiiiQUWbId28Zp1Iqn7AH5XsNl-jEJUwqjfw0fvdj5ttfg2txIRdUyYICdRqgRhkXkBiHXqYOeQk?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=412.23) That's great. Yeah, and I actually have a little section on, I'm not in my book where basically for people who want to remember something like whether they locked the door or not, or unplugged your hairdryer or took their medicine for the day. When you do the thing that you're sure that you're going to forget, what you do is you try to maybe verbalize something totally out of the norm or do some kind of action that is unique and memorable to that situation and the weirder you can make it, obviously the more memorable it is because later on when you're traveling on your plane and you're stressing about whether you locked your door or not, you're suddenly going to remember that thing you did or said at the moment you locked the door and he'd be like, Oh yeah, of course I had locked my door because of the pink elephant, whatever. Thinking about, I said

Cody: [07:40](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/yYeX3TtVS-MWPmqbiiiQUWbId28Zp1Iqn7AH5XsNl-jEJUwqjfw0fvdj5ttfg2txIRdUyYICdRqgRhkXkBiHXqYOeQk?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=460.06) yeah, and you had some great examples showing that I end the book such as imagining that there is a tractor coming at you and George W. Bush has our former president and he's moonwalking Ala Jackson style smoking a cigarette and he puts the cigarette on the back of a turtle that is playing an acoustic guitar with a mushroom. And that comes back to memorizing a 24 digit numbered. And it is eye opening. I think too, the first time that you read something like this, how crazy it is. But I mean the idea of picturing your grandmother naked is probably very extreme for some people. But to be able to do these types of things allows you to remember all these variations of numbers and various techniques.

Nelson: [08:25](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/yYeX3TtVS-MWPmqbiiiQUWbId28Zp1Iqn7AH5XsNl-jEJUwqjfw0fvdj5ttfg2txIRdUyYICdRqgRhkXkBiHXqYOeQk?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=505.38) Yeah. Yeah. And I, you know about example you told me is, uh, is something that's early on in my book where I'm trying to get people to see how easy it is to picture something as silly as what you said and what the power, uh, it holds is that for me. And that example is actually represents that 24 digit number and I outline later in the book how to know that those numbers represent those pictures. But that's not the important thing. The important thing is people realize that it's easy for us. Think of pictures. It's difficult for us to think of complicated symbols like numbers. So any chance you get, you want to try to turn it into those uh, memorable pictures and it'll stick better at sometimes. Yeah, you got, you've got to have some uncomfortable pictures of things, your grandmother naked or you have some people in your, your memory palace or in your mind that you don't necessarily want to see in there because you have bad feelings towards them or don't really care for them. But that's what makes things memorable. Sometimes I get pictures I don't really want to see, but the fact that I don't want to see them make them emotionally kind of disgusting or uncomfortable and then they stick even better. So I allow them.

Cody: [09:37](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/yYeX3TtVS-MWPmqbiiiQUWbId28Zp1Iqn7AH5XsNl-jEJUwqjfw0fvdj5ttfg2txIRdUyYICdRqgRhkXkBiHXqYOeQk?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=577.92) And so would you be able to sum up what the difference is between say, remembering something and then for getting something like what is what makes us remember something?

Nelson: [09:49](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/yYeX3TtVS-MWPmqbiiiQUWbId28Zp1Iqn7AH5XsNl-jEJUwqjfw0fvdj5ttfg2txIRdUyYICdRqgRhkXkBiHXqYOeQk?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=589.39) Yeah. I feel like maybe let's start with the forgetting because I feel like forgetting is when you don't have a memorable enough connection to something and there's different ways. I guess you could talk about forgetting because forgetting implies that you have it in your brain or how did that one point right? Obviously you can't forget something if you didn't memorize it in the first place. And sometimes if you're not primed to take in some information or you're not paying attention, rather that doesn't count as you know, something that you remember it. Even though you, you say like, Oh, I'm listening, but you're actually not cause you're thinking about something else, then you're never going to remember that because it never got registered. So that's not really forgetting. Forgetting I think is if you know you learned it, you tried to learn it in your head somewhere, you just couldn't kind of connect the neurons to fetch that piece of information. So when I say people forget things or you know, they think they have a bad memory cause they're always forgetting. I say no, it's it's, it's only because of two things. One that you, because you weren't paying attention and you actually didn't really memorize it at all or secondly is you didn't come up with a good enough picture that tied enough of your senses and emotional thoughts and feelings to make it memorable. Right.

Cody: [11:09](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/yYeX3TtVS-MWPmqbiiiQUWbId28Zp1Iqn7AH5XsNl-jEJUwqjfw0fvdj5ttfg2txIRdUyYICdRqgRhkXkBiHXqYOeQk?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=669.38) Even when I'm in this conversation with you, it's difficult because on one hand I want to think about what I'm going to say next, but then I also want to listen to what you're saying so that I can either determine whether I'm going to bring up my next question or respond to your current statement and doing so. It can be very difficult that then also even when I meet somebody and they tell me their name, I just, even though I'm trying to bring this practice into my forefront, it's difficult in a sense, like five seconds after they tell me their name, I asked myself what's their name and I just completely forgot. I'm curious, how do you create that mental sticky note to remember these things?

Nelson: [11:49](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/yYeX3TtVS-MWPmqbiiiQUWbId28Zp1Iqn7AH5XsNl-jEJUwqjfw0fvdj5ttfg2txIRdUyYICdRqgRhkXkBiHXqYOeQk?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=709.23) Yeah, that's, that's a tough thing to deal with. You know, it's one thing to, I'm going to sit down and practice my memory and memorize names and uh, it's another to be out live with people, with noises around you and other people interacting with you have things to do or have a different way of presenting their name or information to you. So it's tough to, to prepare it and the way you have to be able to improvise. And of course this is where practice comes in. So techniques themselves will take you so far, but if you're not actively trying to get better at them every day, then you're not going to get much better in, in real time. And so dealing with, you know, conversations that people actually have all you're trying to memorize their name or information that's coming at you while distractions are happening all around you. By practicing these techniques and doing them a lot, you actually get better kind of naturally at being able to make those mental sticky notes on the fly. Um, it's, it's hard to describe but it's, it's, it's just something that comes with time because what you're really doing when you're training your memory is priming it to know how to lay out information in a memorable way every time. Right. Everything and that just comes, it becomes a natural part of your thought process when you're doing anything cognitively.

Cody: [13:16](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/yYeX3TtVS-MWPmqbiiiQUWbId28Zp1Iqn7AH5XsNl-jEJUwqjfw0fvdj5ttfg2txIRdUyYICdRqgRhkXkBiHXqYOeQk?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=796.34) Hmm. That there's, there's one technique that you talked about called the tech system and it's something that I was aware of prior to reading your book and I've tried to memorize these items. These, these associations were just between zero and 10 at using something like tiny cards, which is a, a srs, a space repetition, kind of like an online flashcard system that is created by Duolingo. But then I believe also in your book you mentioned something like Enki which is a way of trying to memorize something but it's somewhat rote memorization and even trying to go back and memorize the associations I have between zero and 10 I can't always recall them. Like I know that seven is heaven and ate his gate. I forgot what nine is. And so what is your technique? Because you have all these various memorization methods you have to major system and others at that, I just completely forgot about that. How do you stay on top and remember these various systems? Is it just simply a matter of continuous practice until they're in your longterm memory

Nelson: [14:22](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/yYeX3TtVS-MWPmqbiiiQUWbId28Zp1Iqn7AH5XsNl-jEJUwqjfw0fvdj5ttfg2txIRdUyYICdRqgRhkXkBiHXqYOeQk?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=862.92) that that's a part of it? Um, because you know, the last thing I want, especially in competition is that I'm trying to remember my actual strategy, right? That should be so kind of ingrained in second nature that I don't have to think of it at all and never forget it. Um, cause I'm actually memorizing other stuff with it. So a good example of this is all the memory palaces that I have. I have hundreds and they span hundreds of locations. And you know, I have some that I practiced with regularly and there's no question. I know them like the back of my hand, but some of them, you know, I haven't used maybe as frequently and sometimes I do forget, uh, bits and pieces of it and have to go back and review. And you know, it's, it's frustrating because I, like I said, I don't want to waste time trying to remember those things.

Nelson: [15:14](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/yYeX3TtVS-MWPmqbiiiQUWbId28Zp1Iqn7AH5XsNl-jEJUwqjfw0fvdj5ttfg2txIRdUyYICdRqgRhkXkBiHXqYOeQk?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=914.27) But the way you get those things into your head is just through frequent use. Um, but then also as, I mean, some things like with your, if you're talking about your, your peg system for numbers, it is helpful to have a consistent one. You know, so like, uh, aid is always gate seven is heaven always. But you know, it's, it's not a big deal if you actually have to maybe just improvised, you know, that you kind of know the structure is that you're just trying to find a word that rhymes. So why not make it up as you go sometimes if you have a blank. So like nine for me, the first thing that comes to mind would be wine or slime, something, something like that. And I wouldn't be too worried if I forgot that. Um, especially for just 10 digits. But yeah, if you want them there, it's a matter of frequent use practice.

Cody: [16:06](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/yYeX3TtVS-MWPmqbiiiQUWbId28Zp1Iqn7AH5XsNl-jEJUwqjfw0fvdj5ttfg2txIRdUyYICdRqgRhkXkBiHXqYOeQk?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=966.53) Yeah. And you also talk about in your book about using this whenever you're in-between things, something like remembering the license plate and, and recently I was at a restaurant and after reading your book they had these five various options. It was, it was like a, uh, a bowl place. And so I had, so what I decided to do was use your technique on visualizing of the sea link go technique. And I thought of grass, which was referring to the spring mix. And then it being spring and growing a lemon grass. And so I chose the lemon grass and then there were chickens plucking about and the grass. And then I remember chicken and it was able to form this image that even five days later I remember exactly what I ordered at this restaurant, which is typically nothing I would actually be able to remember because I always thought of myself as somebody who has the worst memory that I actually created a story for myself saying, you know what? I don't remember people's names and all these frivolous details because I spend my time memorizing the important things. But now I know in some ways that's just not true.

Nelson: [17:13](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/yYeX3TtVS-MWPmqbiiiQUWbId28Zp1Iqn7AH5XsNl-jEJUwqjfw0fvdj5ttfg2txIRdUyYICdRqgRhkXkBiHXqYOeQk?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1033.95) Well that's very interesting. But yeah, that's exactly what I kind of outlined in my book to kind of keep it as simple as possible is it's all about seeing what you're trying to memorize, linking it to some kind of uh, firmly placed thing in your mind already and then go, which is to really out like that memorable to us making a funny, bizarre out of the ordinary. And um, you can apply that to anything, whether it's you trying to memorize a number or you know, moments in your life where you're ordering something at a restaurant or out with someone important to you. You know, you can always do this process ceiling go. And if you can constantly try to think, see things in your mind as pictures that are colorful and creative and then kind of relate them somehow to things you already know, that's the link. And then add some secret sauce to it to make it a little over the top, then you're going to have a better time remembering a lot of your life.

Cody: [18:13](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/yYeX3TtVS-MWPmqbiiiQUWbId28Zp1Iqn7AH5XsNl-jEJUwqjfw0fvdj5ttfg2txIRdUyYICdRqgRhkXkBiHXqYOeQk?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1093.13) Another common example you gave in the book is say, getting directions from somebody that you want to turn left at this square. You want to go up these two blocks and then turn right. And in my mind, I, I have trouble imagining how I can create this mental image within the short timeframe of somebody actually giving me these instructions and say 30 seconds. And I'm curious, what advice would you give to somebody who's trying to implement these visualization techniques? But you know, the, the timeframe you have is so limited.

Nelson: [18:43](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/yYeX3TtVS-MWPmqbiiiQUWbId28Zp1Iqn7AH5XsNl-jEJUwqjfw0fvdj5ttfg2txIRdUyYICdRqgRhkXkBiHXqYOeQk?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1123.66) Yeah. And I recognize that. I mean, um, even for me, it's, you know, under the stress of those kinds of interactions on the street, there's cars honking people running by. We're both rushing in our respective directions. It's not always feasible to, you know, be like, hold on, I'm gonna memorize this. Uh, give me a second while you say these. No, but what you can do is, you know, you're trying to remember information that someone's giving to you at a high rate. I don't think it's too out of the ordinary to ask them to repeat themselves a little bit. And again, it's to make the effort to try to memorize it using this little process and the more you do it, I guarantee you, the easier it becomes. The problem I guess becomes is that you're like, well, I don't want to forget this right now.

Nelson: [19:32](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/yYeX3TtVS-MWPmqbiiiQUWbId28Zp1Iqn7AH5XsNl-jEJUwqjfw0fvdj5ttfg2txIRdUyYICdRqgRhkXkBiHXqYOeQk?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1172.74) I'm too busy. I don't want to get lost. So you'll just not try to memorize it. You'll write it down or you know, put it in your phone, but then you're just kind of fueling the cycles. So when are you ever going to try to do it? The best time to do it is when there's more high stakes, right? The stakes would be that you get lost. So just kind of throwing yourself in the mix, trying your best, and if you have to just ask for it again and be like, listen, I'm doing my best to remember what you said and you say left or right here, you know, you've got to try to ask for it and maybe ask them to slow down a tiny bit, you know?

Cody: [20:04](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/yYeX3TtVS-MWPmqbiiiQUWbId28Zp1Iqn7AH5XsNl-jEJUwqjfw0fvdj5ttfg2txIRdUyYICdRqgRhkXkBiHXqYOeQk?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1204.17) Yeah. I imagined it's also a matter of creating a habit because there's been many times where I'm aware of the technique and I just don't really want to or I don't have the energy to try and picture it in a mental image. Exactly right. You've had those experiences I'm sure where you have to like force yourself to actually think about it because it takes a lot of mental energy to try and visualize these things, to create these associations.

Nelson: [20:28](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/yYeX3TtVS-MWPmqbiiiQUWbId28Zp1Iqn7AH5XsNl-jEJUwqjfw0fvdj5ttfg2txIRdUyYICdRqgRhkXkBiHXqYOeQk?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1228.16) It does. And and memorizing something, it doesn't really sound like the sexiest thing to do. Most people would groan at the thought of having to memorize something, but you know, the more you do it, the more you practice, the more you realize that it's actually a lot of fun to memorize things using this bizarre imagery. The more you want to do it and then the more you're encouraged to do it and more day to day situations and I think that's where you know, you, you'll tend to opt for the real brain memorization in situations like that rather than use your phone.

Cody: [21:02](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/yYeX3TtVS-MWPmqbiiiQUWbId28Zp1Iqn7AH5XsNl-jEJUwqjfw0fvdj5ttfg2txIRdUyYICdRqgRhkXkBiHXqYOeQk?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1262.36) Yeah. And I imagine, you know, you don't talk about this in the book, but I really imagine that having this visualization and doing it on a regular basis actually would make you more creative because you're using your brain to think about all these outlandish things that you would otherwise not care to think about and, and the practice of doing. So I imagine that there's some way that it also makes you more creative. Have you thought about that at all?

Nelson: [21:25](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/yYeX3TtVS-MWPmqbiiiQUWbId28Zp1Iqn7AH5XsNl-jEJUwqjfw0fvdj5ttfg2txIRdUyYICdRqgRhkXkBiHXqYOeQk?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1285.87) Definitely. And I've always been somewhat creative growing up, but not like this. Um, you know, for people listening who are saying to themselves, I'm not very creative. I'm not an artsy person or anything, but I don't necessarily buy that. I think that we can all be creative in our own ways. Maybe not in the exact same visual ways, but there is a lot that people miss out on by not kind of tapping into their creative mind and memory techniques definitely opens that way up. And I've seen that kind of helped me in other things. You know, if it's helped me kind of think way outside the box for things unrelated to memory that I'd never would have been able to think of a prior to mastering these techniques.

Cody: [22:13](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/yYeX3TtVS-MWPmqbiiiQUWbId28Zp1Iqn7AH5XsNl-jEJUwqjfw0fvdj5ttfg2txIRdUyYICdRqgRhkXkBiHXqYOeQk?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1333.53) And now there, there are some cool benefits to having a great memory technique. And one that you talked about I'd love for you to elaborate on is a time that you were able to get your entire meal tab, which was about $650 covered by the restaurant.

Nelson: [22:28](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/yYeX3TtVS-MWPmqbiiiQUWbId28Zp1Iqn7AH5XsNl-jEJUwqjfw0fvdj5ttfg2txIRdUyYICdRqgRhkXkBiHXqYOeQk?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1348.83) Yeah, yeah. That was a great summer where I just kind of made a new group of friends and they were learning about who I was and what I could do with my memory. And you know, we'd go out to big dinners together and all our credit cards would be thrown into a pile to split the bill and someone, uh, who would always say to the manager, Hey, this guy can memorize, you know, blah, blah, blah. What if you memorize all the credit cards? Would you consider giving us the meal for free? And at one place the guy said, yeah, sure. That's impossible. Of course I did. It wasn't that hard. And uh, yeah, we ended up doing that a few times that summer at different restaurants. It was kind of our little parlor curriculum's pretty fun. We didn't always get the full bill for free. We got uh, you know, like a complementary dessert or whatever. It was good times.

Cody: [23:16](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/yYeX3TtVS-MWPmqbiiiQUWbId28Zp1Iqn7AH5XsNl-jEJUwqjfw0fvdj5ttfg2txIRdUyYICdRqgRhkXkBiHXqYOeQk?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1396.45) I'm wondering if you could try and briefly explain, I know it's a bit complicated, but briefly explain the technique that you use for memorizing. Does credit card numbers?

Nelson: [23:24](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/yYeX3TtVS-MWPmqbiiiQUWbId28Zp1Iqn7AH5XsNl-jEJUwqjfw0fvdj5ttfg2txIRdUyYICdRqgRhkXkBiHXqYOeQk?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1404.66) Yeah, so most credit cards are about 16 digits or so. So there were about 10, so that's 160 digits. Right. And the guy gave me a five minutes, which to most people it's very difficult to do. My personal record is memorizing about 400 digits in five minutes. So this was relatively a lot of time to do was asked

Nelson: [23:46](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/yYeX3TtVS-MWPmqbiiiQUWbId28Zp1Iqn7AH5XsNl-jEJUwqjfw0fvdj5ttfg2txIRdUyYICdRqgRhkXkBiHXqYOeQk?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1426.13) of me. But um, what I did is for each card I basically split the number up into my number system and then kind of attached that little story that I came up with to the image of the card. You know, some had like a, a blue mastercard and other one was like a American Express Green. So had kind of attached the story to that cards cause he did the cards out of order too. Um, so I have to say, oh that's the green American Express. Okay. This is the story that goes with it. And it's basically I have a number system for every uh, three digit combination that's a thousand different images that I have preset in my mind. But every time I see any of those combinations, I already have an image that I go to to represent those numbers. And what it ends up being is just, I weave a story together with all the images that come from those numbers and just that alone makes them incredibly weird and memorable.

Cody: [24:44](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/yYeX3TtVS-MWPmqbiiiQUWbId28Zp1Iqn7AH5XsNl-jEJUwqjfw0fvdj5ttfg2txIRdUyYICdRqgRhkXkBiHXqYOeQk?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1484.62) And you were able to get a lot of free bills out of that.

Nelson: [24:48](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/yYeX3TtVS-MWPmqbiiiQUWbId28Zp1Iqn7AH5XsNl-jEJUwqjfw0fvdj5ttfg2txIRdUyYICdRqgRhkXkBiHXqYOeQk?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1488.86) Yeah.

Cody: [24:49](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/yYeX3TtVS-MWPmqbiiiQUWbId28Zp1Iqn7AH5XsNl-jEJUwqjfw0fvdj5ttfg2txIRdUyYICdRqgRhkXkBiHXqYOeQk?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1489.79) And, and so two, I would absolutely recommend to anybody listening to absolutely read his book. It's called, remember it's available on Amazon and probably everywhere else. And I was also a bit, I'm gonna use the word flabbergasted that you were even able to get doctor sent Sanjay Gupta to right. Your your forward.

Nelson: [25:09](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/yYeX3TtVS-MWPmqbiiiQUWbId28Zp1Iqn7AH5XsNl-jEJUwqjfw0fvdj5ttfg2txIRdUyYICdRqgRhkXkBiHXqYOeQk?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1509.8) Hey Man, listen, me too. I was so happy when he said yes, I didn't think you were, but he was a super nice guy. I met him, uh, when we did a small segment for CNN, bit about memory and uh, I think the reason he did is because I walked him through an example of how to use this visualization and memory palace technique. And he was floored by it as well. And I think he never forgot that. So he was happy to help.

Cody: [25:35](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/yYeX3TtVS-MWPmqbiiiQUWbId28Zp1Iqn7AH5XsNl-jEJUwqjfw0fvdj5ttfg2txIRdUyYICdRqgRhkXkBiHXqYOeQk?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1535.69) Hmm. And on the topic of Memory Palace, so I think it, Josh, from the walking with Einstein, he did a great job of explaining the memory palace that I still can think of to this day where he used the term, if you meet somebody who's name is Baker, you're not going to remember that. But if they say that they're at Baker, you imagine all the senses, the smells, the imagery that they're wearing, a baker's hat. And even in your book you have this example of walking through a house and trying to memorize a checklist for a shopping list. And so I imagined going into the kitchen, I see coca cola labels all over. I see somebody running around like naked with the coca cola bottles hanging on the walls and stuff. And then I go into the living room where there's a fireplace and I imagine a baker putting in bread and the smell of bread and all that.

Cody: [26:18](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/yYeX3TtVS-MWPmqbiiiQUWbId28Zp1Iqn7AH5XsNl-jEJUwqjfw0fvdj5ttfg2txIRdUyYICdRqgRhkXkBiHXqYOeQk?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1578.56) And so in some ways a palace, a memory palace is just you visualize yourself walking through the various rooms in your house. Now one thing that I think even Josh only briefly mentioned at, which I don't think you talked about in your book, was at how many memory palaces can you possibly have? As well as I think the issue that Josh encountered is trying to remove the existing associations so he could reuse the memory palace for other types of memory techniques. I'm curious, have you ever done that? Do you just keep going to new places and trying to memorize them? Have you ever tried to remove the existing associations so you can you say your house for something else?

Nelson: [26:55](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/yYeX3TtVS-MWPmqbiiiQUWbId28Zp1Iqn7AH5XsNl-jEJUwqjfw0fvdj5ttfg2txIRdUyYICdRqgRhkXkBiHXqYOeQk?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1615.72) Yeah, I actually have a little section in the book about kind of managing your memory palaces because that's one of the frequent questions I get is, okay, cool. You show me how to use the memory palace. How do I realistically use this for things in my daily life? Like you know, to do lists change every day, right? If I'm going to memorize them every day, what's going to happen with the, through the list I've memorized in my house yesterday? Is it gonna Clash? Am I going to remember that one instead of today's or what about stuff I want to keep forever? Right? So the way I approach that is you kind of have to decide what you want to do with it. If it's something you'd like to keep forever, like let's say you want to learn, you know the periodic table and that's just something you want to have in your brain for all time, right?

Nelson: [27:38](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/yYeX3TtVS-MWPmqbiiiQUWbId28Zp1Iqn7AH5XsNl-jEJUwqjfw0fvdj5ttfg2txIRdUyYICdRqgRhkXkBiHXqYOeQk?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1658.38) For all access than what I would do is create a memory palace specifically for that piece of information and never put anything else there aside from the periodic table. That way it always is the place that holds the information for the periodic table and nothing else. If it's stuff that's going to be, you know, memorized and then recalled later and then you don't need it ever again. Stuff like that. What I do is I have a bunch of memory palaces that I cycle through and by the time I've, you know, used up all my memory palaces and cycle back to the first one, uh, most of what I put there, you know, a few days ago or whatever is forgotten. Right. And I can reuse it without having any clash or ghosts of what I memorized before. And so that's a good way to kind of keep those memory palaces fresh is to have a kind of an arsenal of them. Not just one or two but maybe you know, five or six. It really depends. You can make as many as you like and then just keep them constantly on rotation.

Cody: [28:44](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/yYeX3TtVS-MWPmqbiiiQUWbId28Zp1Iqn7AH5XsNl-jEJUwqjfw0fvdj5ttfg2txIRdUyYICdRqgRhkXkBiHXqYOeQk?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1724.86) Hmm. Now apart from the memory palace, you mentioned basically every other technique that probably not every technique known to man but many of these memory techniques, they go back thousands of years and in many ways our current society just forgot about them and also some ways I was a little overwhelmed by all the various types of techniques that we could use. And I'm curious if there is say maybe the top two, top three or four types of techniques that you think everybody should know and that would cover the vast majority of of 90% of what we would need to remember in our daily lives. What would you say those are? That we should all have those techniques?

Nelson: [29:24](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/yYeX3TtVS-MWPmqbiiiQUWbId28Zp1Iqn7AH5XsNl-jEJUwqjfw0fvdj5ttfg2txIRdUyYICdRqgRhkXkBiHXqYOeQk?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1764.81) Yeah, I mean look, I try my best because it can get a bit in the weeds I guess, you know in terms of strategies for specific things, but I really try to keep it simple with that ceiling go idea because that is honestly where it all starts from. And if you just remember that three step process, you can literally remember anything. Obviously there's things that are going to be harder to see than others. And you have to have some kind of helping hand to maybe have an idea of how to go about it. And that's really what the rest of my book is about is different suggestions for how to encode this or to encode that in different ways to link this. And we can link that. But even if you don't know what those are, just going off of ceiling go should be enough if you don't want to get too overwhelmed. But if we're going to dive deeper into some specifics here, I think the most powerful thing to know is a memory palace technique. And then maybe after that the linking system, which is helpful for things that are kind of like definition style, where you have one thing that means something else and you're trying to remember there kind of connection there.

Cody: [30:35](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/yYeX3TtVS-MWPmqbiiiQUWbId28Zp1Iqn7AH5XsNl-jEJUwqjfw0fvdj5ttfg2txIRdUyYICdRqgRhkXkBiHXqYOeQk?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1835.8) And you also mentioned this in the book at the end of it, that you can use these techniques to help you for, to learn a foreign language, uh, wondering if you could tell me more about that. Yeah. So

Nelson: [30:47](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/yYeX3TtVS-MWPmqbiiiQUWbId28Zp1Iqn7AH5XsNl-jEJUwqjfw0fvdj5ttfg2txIRdUyYICdRqgRhkXkBiHXqYOeQk?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1847.69) obviously learning languages is the big task for anybody, but part of the process, you have to memorize things, right? That's inevitable. And if you can remember definitions of words, what they mean, that even grammar rules, then you're going to be able to get to some kind of speaking fluency quicker, but still doesn't replace practicing the language, hearing it a lot, writing it and being amidst the culture to really understand the language and the people. But if you can get us a headstart on memorizing, let's say the first thousand most popular or frequently used words in a language you're way ahead of the game, right? And imagine you could do that in a couple of days, right? And just a few sittings. That's incredible, right? Most people struggle with learning a handful of words over a year as the, you know, they take French or Spanish in high school and they've taken four years of it, and by the end of high school, they can't even have a conversation. Right. So, yeah. So I just talk about a few kind of quick tips to encode some of these kind of definitions of foreign words really quick. There's a great book out there that dies way deeper into it called fluid forever by Gabriel Wyner who employees or writes a lot about some of his, some of these memory techniques and language learning process. It's a great book

Cody: [32:07](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/yYeX3TtVS-MWPmqbiiiQUWbId28Zp1Iqn7AH5XsNl-jEJUwqjfw0fvdj5ttfg2txIRdUyYICdRqgRhkXkBiHXqYOeQk?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1927.78) that that will be in the show notes of course. And one of the examples you should give is a shoe s h o u is a French word that means cabbage. I'm not sure if I'm saying it correctly, but you imagine yourself taking a shoe and stepping on the cabbage.

Nelson: [32:21](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/yYeX3TtVS-MWPmqbiiiQUWbId28Zp1Iqn7AH5XsNl-jEJUwqjfw0fvdj5ttfg2txIRdUyYICdRqgRhkXkBiHXqYOeQk?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1941.95) That's it. Yeah, and suddenly you have, you know when we an American English speaker, here's the word shoe, which is how you pronounce it in French, sounds like shoe. So I'm going to relate what I know, which is some foreign word that sounds like the word shoe that I know to what means in the foreign language, which is a cabbage. So I pick up a shoe. I'm going to just going to imagine stomping on this cabbage with my shoe and sound. It would make the master would make the, maybe it's my dinner and now I suddenly don't have any dinner. You know, like some emotional kind of charged feeling. And there you go. Every time I hear that word shoe, I'm going to think of a shoe. It's slamming on this, this cabbage, and that's going to remind me that it's cabbage.

Cody: [33:06](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/yYeX3TtVS-MWPmqbiiiQUWbId28Zp1Iqn7AH5XsNl-jEJUwqjfw0fvdj5ttfg2txIRdUyYICdRqgRhkXkBiHXqYOeQk?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1986.43) Wow. And these are techniques that I think anybody can learn. And it's been proven to me, even in the past week of memorizing simple things like a restaurant menu is, it's simply about practice and taking these techniques and doing them over and over again. And I don't even think we have to do them with full intent. It can be something as sitting in traffic and looking at the license plate in front of us. I'm curious, can you tell me what would be a simple technique that we could use to say, remember the license plate that's in front of us in the car?

Nelson: [33:35](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/yYeX3TtVS-MWPmqbiiiQUWbId28Zp1Iqn7AH5XsNl-jEJUwqjfw0fvdj5ttfg2txIRdUyYICdRqgRhkXkBiHXqYOeQk?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=2015.26) Yeah. If you're stuck in traffic, a great exercise to just practice your creativity. Uh, with coming up with pictures is to look at license plate numbers. You know, they're all around you. So just trying to come up with associations, four pairs of letters and pairs of numbers and pairs of letters or numbers. Yeah. You can just try to come up with pictures as you, as you see them, and give your brand a little workout.

Cody: [33:59](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/yYeX3TtVS-MWPmqbiiiQUWbId28Zp1Iqn7AH5XsNl-jEJUwqjfw0fvdj5ttfg2txIRdUyYICdRqgRhkXkBiHXqYOeQk?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=2039.01) Hmm. Yeah, I was just thinking of, so if I saw like a Z, h r I, the first thing that comes to my head is a zebra and a hotel and a rabbit. So now I think of as zebra walks into a hotel and the concierge, it's a rabbit. And then they have a conversation about me and then I'm wondering, why are they having, what are they talking about me? What are they saying? And it can be ridiculous, obviously, but the faster and the more you practice this technique of, of creating these visualizations in these, these links, the faster it's going to be in the longterm, the more that you do it, right?

Nelson: [34:35](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/yYeX3TtVS-MWPmqbiiiQUWbId28Zp1Iqn7AH5XsNl-jEJUwqjfw0fvdj5ttfg2txIRdUyYICdRqgRhkXkBiHXqYOeQk?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=2075.5) Yeah, yeah, exactly. And you want to flex those imaginative muscles to get better at it.

Cody: [34:41](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/yYeX3TtVS-MWPmqbiiiQUWbId28Zp1Iqn7AH5XsNl-jEJUwqjfw0fvdj5ttfg2txIRdUyYICdRqgRhkXkBiHXqYOeQk?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=2081.86) Hmm. No, I want to take a step back from the book and all these various techniques as I'm sure you talk about them all the time and talk about how you came to be a memory championship. And then you also have the only online world memory championships, a service other than having to go into an actual physical competition. It is that you do it online. Right. I'm curious, can you tell me how did you start in this focus of memorizing and the various techniques and then go on to start everything?

Nelson: [35:13](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/yYeX3TtVS-MWPmqbiiiQUWbId28Zp1Iqn7AH5XsNl-jEJUwqjfw0fvdj5ttfg2txIRdUyYICdRqgRhkXkBiHXqYOeQk?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=2113.87) So yeah, I um, no, I started this because of my grandmother. She had Alzheimer's and eventually passed away from it and that kind of got me really motivated to make sure that the same thing didn't happen to me. And um, that's when I discovered memory championships and I told myself, I'm going to win this thing or I'm going to really train to try to win this thing. And that's when I kind of got obsessed with memorizing and I got obsessed with the sensation of what these memory techniques bring, which is, it makes me feel like you have some kind of super power.

Cody: [35:48](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/yYeX3TtVS-MWPmqbiiiQUWbId28Zp1Iqn7AH5XsNl-jEJUwqjfw0fvdj5ttfg2txIRdUyYICdRqgRhkXkBiHXqYOeQk?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=2148.82) How old were you at the time?

Nelson: [35:50](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/yYeX3TtVS-MWPmqbiiiQUWbId28Zp1Iqn7AH5XsNl-jEJUwqjfw0fvdj5ttfg2txIRdUyYICdRqgRhkXkBiHXqYOeQk?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=2150.76) This was about 10 years ago. Well, a little more in 2008, 2009. It was kind of the end of my grandmother's life and that's when I really started thinking about memory.

Cody: [36:01](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/yYeX3TtVS-MWPmqbiiiQUWbId28Zp1Iqn7AH5XsNl-jEJUwqjfw0fvdj5ttfg2txIRdUyYICdRqgRhkXkBiHXqYOeQk?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=2161.06) Was this before or after college?

Nelson: [36:03](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/yYeX3TtVS-MWPmqbiiiQUWbId28Zp1Iqn7AH5XsNl-jEJUwqjfw0fvdj5ttfg2txIRdUyYICdRqgRhkXkBiHXqYOeQk?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=2163.78) Uh, it was kind of in the middle of Grad school. I took a year off and uh, came back to finish it off. So really not during my ma, my college days. Unfortunately I wish I had known this stuff during my undergrad years. I would've been able to study that better. But uh, yeah. And then after that, after I started winning championships and getting a lot of notoriety for being a good memorizer, um, lot of people asked me to help them train them, speak to their employees, things like that. So it kind of shifted towards being my career and I've worked on a number of different projects. One of them has been this online championship that you mentioned called Memory League. We ran a kind of a international championship for a few years where we and we developed software. Um, more people could actually play each other or challenge each other online with these memory games. And yeah, we're just trying to spread the word. I'm trying to spread the word about memory techniques and get people hyped up about training their brains.

Cody: [37:08](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/yYeX3TtVS-MWPmqbiiiQUWbId28Zp1Iqn7AH5XsNl-jEJUwqjfw0fvdj5ttfg2txIRdUyYICdRqgRhkXkBiHXqYOeQk?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=2228.95) Hmm. And so you touched on Alzheimer's and my book actually, if any of you ever prepared my book is there is a guy named Wilkie who was a sort of like my grandfather in a way and he ended up suffering from Alzheimer's as well. And I started to see his deterioration as he started to get to go along. It was very like a gradual decline in his ability to remember stuff. And it was definitely disheartening where I even thought to myself, I would like to have my will that if I ever can't remember the people around me that I would want to be, have assisted suicide at that point. But you can't even make that decision because you keep on forgetting everything and I just thought how terrible it would be to be in kind of trapped in something like that.

Nelson: [37:53](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/yYeX3TtVS-MWPmqbiiiQUWbId28Zp1Iqn7AH5XsNl-jEJUwqjfw0fvdj5ttfg2txIRdUyYICdRqgRhkXkBiHXqYOeQk?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=2273.43) Yeah, it's, it's kind of a nightmare and that was kind of the motivating factor when I saw my grandmother in that situation, I just thought like how horrible it is for her and for all of us around her loved ones. You know, there was a documentary I watched a few years ago about a guy who was getting older and realizing that he had early onset Alzheimer's disease and it was going to get very bad in a number of years and he explored the choice to make a kind of that assisted suicide and it was a weird documentary. Made me very uncomfortable, but at the same time it made a lot of sense. You know, you're a shell of yourself at that point. What's the point you know, of, of being there

Cody: [38:36](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/yYeX3TtVS-MWPmqbiiiQUWbId28Zp1Iqn7AH5XsNl-jEJUwqjfw0fvdj5ttfg2txIRdUyYICdRqgRhkXkBiHXqYOeQk?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=2316.25) now, you've also climbed Mount Everest a few times now and order to, to raise awareness for Alzheimer's. Can you tell me about that?

Nelson: [38:45](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/yYeX3TtVS-MWPmqbiiiQUWbId28Zp1Iqn7AH5XsNl-jEJUwqjfw0fvdj5ttfg2txIRdUyYICdRqgRhkXkBiHXqYOeQk?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=2325.41) Yup. I've actually had, I haven't submitted yet. I've come very, very close each of the times, excruciating. We close to the summit, but I've had the turnaround for one reason or another and I'm hoping to get should to go back next spring for my fourth attempt. But, uh, you know, the bigger thing is, is I try to do it to raise awareness for a, again, Alzheimer's disease and to raise some funds for research. And, uh, it's always been about kind of the journey, the memorable journey of those trips and trying to keep my life as exciting and memorable as possible while I, I still have all my faculties. Yeah.

Cody: [39:21](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/yYeX3TtVS-MWPmqbiiiQUWbId28Zp1Iqn7AH5XsNl-jEJUwqjfw0fvdj5ttfg2txIRdUyYICdRqgRhkXkBiHXqYOeQk?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=2361.71) Hmm. That reminds me of, there was the recent release of free climb or, or I believe it was so low free Solo. And then there was another documentary on Netflix if he, a few years ago where I, I believe, I'm not sure if it was about, there was one about men or Mt. Everest. But my memory's not doing too great because I didn't make the ceiling go association. And I, I'm curious, when you've been up there these three times, was it a personal decision to not proceed? Was it the, the guides around you? What was the situation around that? Because I know many people have died because it's sort of, you have that sunk cost fallacy where it's like you've made it this far and it's just like, why not, you know, the extra 10% and I'll make the journey. How did you deal with not making the summit?

Nelson: [40:05](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/yYeX3TtVS-MWPmqbiiiQUWbId28Zp1Iqn7AH5XsNl-jEJUwqjfw0fvdj5ttfg2txIRdUyYICdRqgRhkXkBiHXqYOeQk?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=2405.83) Yeah, I mean those decisions were truly mine. I had people to help kind of discuss those decisions with, but ultimately it was my decision. I thought high altitude, nobody can tell you really what you're feeling or what's right. It's up to you. Um, and they have their own issues to work with. It's really hard to worry about someone else at that point because every ounce of your will and body is going into surviving for yourself. So turning around sucks. It's very, very difficult, especially being so, so, so close after all, you know, the money and time that you put into preparing and getting to that point. And then you just got to in a sense give up. But you know, I just got to remind myself that I'm not here to kill myself on one of these mountains. I'm just here to experience a journey, you know, find something out about myself and client for the cause. And you know, each time I turn around, I asked myself that question, have I done what I wanted to do in the grand scheme of things? And the answer was always yes. So it also helps up these mountains to aren't going anywhere. So yeah, I can always come back, you know?

Cody: [41:16](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/yYeX3TtVS-MWPmqbiiiQUWbId28Zp1Iqn7AH5XsNl-jEJUwqjfw0fvdj5ttfg2txIRdUyYICdRqgRhkXkBiHXqYOeQk?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=2476.06) Hmm. And so you've done that in attempts to, to raise awareness for Alzheimer's Day. And so obviously we hope to prevent more people from getting Alzheimer's and know that there's drugs and science that are helping to eliminate that in the future. And in lastly, in the book you talk brain health and the fact that it comes down to four basic things about diet, physical training, social interaction and brain training as a way of keeping your brain healthy. I'm curious if you can talk about that as a way of preventing us from getting Alzheimer's.

Nelson: [41:49](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/yYeX3TtVS-MWPmqbiiiQUWbId28Zp1Iqn7AH5XsNl-jEJUwqjfw0fvdj5ttfg2txIRdUyYICdRqgRhkXkBiHXqYOeQk?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=2509.54) Yeah. So you know, I want people to have kind of a little bit of a game plan on how to keep their brain healthy. You know, it's a shame that that kind of stuff is not instilled in us from an early age because for physical health, we know what to do. You know, you know, you gotta eat right and you know roughly the kinds of foods that are recommended to stay healthy. And so you can follow that. You also know you should be active and doing certain types of exercises to keep your weight reasonable and your heart healthy. But nobody really tells you anything about your brain and how to keep that thing healthy, which is unfortunate because that's probably more important than your body since your mind is running the body. Right? So I've come up with kind of four pillars as you mentioned. One is eating right, there's certain foods you can eat to kind of feed your brain, physical fitness. So your brain is always having blood pump to it to function. So if you can have a healthy body through physical exercise, you're going to have to help you brand as well. That works in his prime is very well, uh, also social interaction. So try and keep your mind active and entertained and busy by, you know, being with others,

Nelson: [43:03](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/yYeX3TtVS-MWPmqbiiiQUWbId28Zp1Iqn7AH5XsNl-jEJUwqjfw0fvdj5ttfg2txIRdUyYICdRqgRhkXkBiHXqYOeQk?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=2583.7) people who also are trying to stimulate their own minds, you're going to inherently enhanced your experience as well too. And then finally is the actual brain exercise, which is doing some type of memory training or puzzle solving or learning a new skill. I like to insure it. I think the best thing to view it as is if you find yourself in a situation where it's uncomfortable, like it's something difficult for you or it's not comfortable, then that's probably doing really good things for your brain. So you know the feeling when you try to learn something new and you just suck at it or it's really hard that is doing wonders for your brand. So you should keep doing things like that.

Cody: [43:42](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/yYeX3TtVS-MWPmqbiiiQUWbId28Zp1Iqn7AH5XsNl-jEJUwqjfw0fvdj5ttfg2txIRdUyYICdRqgRhkXkBiHXqYOeQk?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=2622.49) Yeah. I'm curious on the, on the brain training aspect, there's a lot of controversy a few years ago over these brain training games. Like Lumosity, if I'm saying that correctly. Okay. Do you think that they're helpful or do you think just the science just doesn't support that it's worth paying for something like that?

Nelson: [43:58](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/yYeX3TtVS-MWPmqbiiiQUWbId28Zp1Iqn7AH5XsNl-jEJUwqjfw0fvdj5ttfg2txIRdUyYICdRqgRhkXkBiHXqYOeQk?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=2638.34) No, I'm a big supporter of Lumosity and things like that. You know, I think there's always some people trying to go after people who make claims, you know, and I'm sure somewhere, even what I'm saying about memory training, someone's going to pick out and say it's, it's bad for this reason, but listen, I'm perfect example of this and that. You can't argue that, but my memory is better because I've trained these techniques. You can't deny that. And I don't think that I'm going to lose that when I get older. I'm still gonna know how to memorize better than anyone or a lot of people. And that's going to carry me further I think as I get older. And I think that's the same with any kind of cognitive training that you do. It's going to translate somewhere, uh, in, in a positive way. Sure. I'm super skilled at memorizing playing cards.

Nelson: [44:47](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/yYeX3TtVS-MWPmqbiiiQUWbId28Zp1Iqn7AH5XsNl-jEJUwqjfw0fvdj5ttfg2txIRdUyYICdRqgRhkXkBiHXqYOeQk?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=2687.67) It's one thing that I try and multiple times a day and then you could say, okay, well how's that going to help you? You're really good at memorizing cards. Great. But the actual process that goes into that is super applicable to many other things that I may have to memorize every day. And so it's the same argument is like when you go to the gym and you work out specific muscles, like when are you ever going to do like a single bicep curl? You know, on a machine like that? Never. But there are tons of movements you're going to do, whether you're trying to avoid a car that nearly hits you or you fall to the ground, you know, and you've got to get back up where you are gonna need that bicep muscle, right? And so working out these different facets of cognitive strength and flexibility rounds out for your everyday life, you know? And, and I think all of them kind of help with that.

Cody: [45:37](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/yYeX3TtVS-MWPmqbiiiQUWbId28Zp1Iqn7AH5XsNl-jEJUwqjfw0fvdj5ttfg2txIRdUyYICdRqgRhkXkBiHXqYOeQk?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=2737.43) So at the end of the day, it's a matter of exercising your brain just as much as you exercise your physical health, whether that's through apps like Lumosity or other methods, whether it's like learning a deck of playing cards. Exactly. Yep. On a side note, do you know if the Mosty you, if there's any other online game type service that helps to teach you these various memory techniques?

Nelson: [46:00](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/yYeX3TtVS-MWPmqbiiiQUWbId28Zp1Iqn7AH5XsNl-jEJUwqjfw0fvdj5ttfg2txIRdUyYICdRqgRhkXkBiHXqYOeQk?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=2760.61) Yes. The Lumosity is good. I know they're, they're working on more kind of tip oriented strategies and stuff rather than just the games, the memory leak, the software that I was talking about, they have some tips as well through kind of their online platform aside from the games. And then I'm always trying to make new videos where I can share kind of these tips and because a lot of the practice, honestly you can do in daily life, right? You meet people all the time, you have things to memorize every day. So if you just know some of the techniques, you can actually just practice it with your actual day to day stuff, you know? So,

Cody: [46:39](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/yYeX3TtVS-MWPmqbiiiQUWbId28Zp1Iqn7AH5XsNl-jEJUwqjfw0fvdj5ttfg2txIRdUyYICdRqgRhkXkBiHXqYOeQk?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=2799.62) and that's memory leak.com by the way. Okay. And I just want to touch back on all the four pillars, like when it comes to diet, do you have any particular diet that you'd like to stick to?

Nelson: [46:51](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/yYeX3TtVS-MWPmqbiiiQUWbId28Zp1Iqn7AH5XsNl-jEJUwqjfw0fvdj5ttfg2txIRdUyYICdRqgRhkXkBiHXqYOeQk?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=2811.77) Um, I play around with a bunch of different kinds. Um, I'm really kind of a cycle of, of being on Keto Keto Diet, which for me has done wonders for my mental clarity. I don't know if that's going to be the only thing I would recommend. I don't know if it's for everybody, but I think in general I can say something like no sugars, low carb diets, no processed foods, that kind of thing, uh, is really where your brain begins to shine.

Cody: [47:21](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/yYeX3TtVS-MWPmqbiiiQUWbId28Zp1Iqn7AH5XsNl-jEJUwqjfw0fvdj5ttfg2txIRdUyYICdRqgRhkXkBiHXqYOeQk?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=2841.68) Yeah. I've been practicing Paleo for a long time and I had been adding intermittent fasting of the 16 where I was an eight, an eight hour window from like 12 to eight o'clock. And then I'll fast beyond that. Yeah. Yeah. I've been mixing that into and the really, I, it's, it's worked wonders to, yeah. Uh, but then on that note, of course everybody has a different body and I think there's been emerging science and beliefs of this whole Paleo Keto movement. But then also you look at the, I believe it's called the blue group zone or the Blue Zone, where they've done studies all around the world, looking at what helps people live the longest and you look in Asian cultures is that they eat tons and tons of rice and noodles, which is a lot of carbs. It's so we're here, we're demonizing carbs, but there's also, they've shown at genetically that some people are predisposition to processing fat versus carbs better. And so it's all about what works for you, and I think that's going to be different for everyone. So keep that in mind. Then lastly, on the physical training, is there any technique, any routine that you regularly incorporate? I mean, for me, yes, my routine is I go to the gym

Nelson: [48:31](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/yYeX3TtVS-MWPmqbiiiQUWbId28Zp1Iqn7AH5XsNl-jEJUwqjfw0fvdj5ttfg2txIRdUyYICdRqgRhkXkBiHXqYOeQk?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=2911.31) practically every day. Maybe I take a day off each week, but my thing is Crossfit.

Cody: [48:36](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/yYeX3TtVS-MWPmqbiiiQUWbId28Zp1Iqn7AH5XsNl-jEJUwqjfw0fvdj5ttfg2txIRdUyYICdRqgRhkXkBiHXqYOeQk?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=2916.35) Yeah, yeah. I've actually been doing Crossfit for the past few weeks and I absolutely love it. Nice.

Nelson: [48:41](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/yYeX3TtVS-MWPmqbiiiQUWbId28Zp1Iqn7AH5XsNl-jEJUwqjfw0fvdj5ttfg2txIRdUyYICdRqgRhkXkBiHXqYOeQk?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=2921.21) Yeah, I, uh, I've been doing this since 2012 and for me, I love that it was always changing. It's never the same thing. I always find new things to become sore from and uh, that always tells me that I'm moving the needle in terms of my, my strength and endurance and yeah, I love the competitive side of it. That really works for me in terms of pushing myself. So that's the way I get my activity and,

Cody: [49:08](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/yYeX3TtVS-MWPmqbiiiQUWbId28Zp1Iqn7AH5XsNl-jEJUwqjfw0fvdj5ttfg2txIRdUyYICdRqgRhkXkBiHXqYOeQk?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=2948.81) hmm. And, and so on a, on a daily routine basis, what does your typical day look like?

Nelson: [49:15](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/yYeX3TtVS-MWPmqbiiiQUWbId28Zp1Iqn7AH5XsNl-jEJUwqjfw0fvdj5ttfg2txIRdUyYICdRqgRhkXkBiHXqYOeQk?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=2955.59) Yup. So I wake up very early, a little bit before six and do a bit of work and then I go to the gym train for about an hour, an hour and a half, come back, dive into my memory training. So each day I'll do about, I mean, it depends on whether a competitions coming up or not, but let's say there isn't, I'll train my brain about two hours a day. Uh, when there's a competition that is coming soon, I will ramp up to about three to five hours a day. And, um, yeah, so I train kind of the specific events that happen at these competitions, memorizing names, memorizing cards, memorizing numbers, words, uh, dates, things like that. And, uh, I kind of work for an hour, take a little break, come back, work for another hour to take a little break. It's important for me, especially since I'm always using my mind to kind of do short ish sessions. If not, I just get burnt out, you know?

Cody: [50:13](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/yYeX3TtVS-MWPmqbiiiQUWbId28Zp1Iqn7AH5XsNl-jEJUwqjfw0fvdj5ttfg2txIRdUyYICdRqgRhkXkBiHXqYOeQk?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=3013.54) Yeah. I think there's, there's science that shows that we, you know, we have the Pomodoro, which is based on 25 minute sessions and there's science about 50 minutes. And it all just depends on the person about what your routine looks like because you're going to get tired throughout the day. But being able to

Nelson: [50:28](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/yYeX3TtVS-MWPmqbiiiQUWbId28Zp1Iqn7AH5XsNl-jEJUwqjfw0fvdj5ttfg2txIRdUyYICdRqgRhkXkBiHXqYOeQk?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=3028.01) recognize when you're at your, your troughs versus your peaks is an important fact. Yeah. And there's even, um, I think the scientist's name was the girl nick. Uh, but this is a genetic effect is that if you are working on something, let's say you're writing a paper or a speech or just working on a project, if you take a break from it and come back to it a little bit later, it's going to be more memorable to you because of that break. Actually, you know, some people think that they need to study something for two, three hours straight, but you're actually would be doing better if you took short breaks in between in terms of wanting it to stick kind of more naturally. You don't have to do any memory techniques there. It's almost like an inherent thing that will happen if you break it up right and you, even if you try and learn or read something before bed, their scientists shows that we're more likely to remember it if we remember it and then go to sleep right after.

Nelson: [51:20](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/yYeX3TtVS-MWPmqbiiiQUWbId28Zp1Iqn7AH5XsNl-jEJUwqjfw0fvdj5ttfg2txIRdUyYICdRqgRhkXkBiHXqYOeQk?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=3080.05) Yeah, I've, I've heard that too. Yup. Now when it comes to supplements, I know supplements a accounts really for maybe like five or 10%, probably less than 10% of your overall output or your ability to memorize certain things. And it really definitely comes down to this four basic pillars that we mentioned earlier. I'm curious, are there any supplements, if you have any thoughts on them? One in particular, I thought that even Tim Ferriss has mentioned taking, it's called Huperzine A, uh, and I'm curious if you've heard of that and if you have any thoughts and other supplements that has been shown to help improve memory. I have not heard of that one. Uh, to be honest and I don't know. I've, I've heard of things over the years that might help your memory. Things like the kind of supplements I take are like DHA Omega three, which are kind of more dietary, but I don't, I'm too scared to try any of these other kinds of things just because I really like what I'm doing with my own memory and I don't want to mess it up. Right. I could be missing out on stuff, I don't know. But I haven't explored too much with that. Yeah, don't break what's not broken.

Nelson: [52:23](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/yYeX3TtVS-MWPmqbiiiQUWbId28Zp1Iqn7AH5XsNl-jEJUwqjfw0fvdj5ttfg2txIRdUyYICdRqgRhkXkBiHXqYOeQk?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=3143.03) Okay. So I think we're reaching the end and I want to just ask perhaps at one or two more questions and I'm curious, what is your North Star? What are you hoping to achieve? I know it's a big question. What are you hoping to achieve over your lifetime there? Is there any goal or what is your why as Simon Sinek? Always your first two. You know, my why, my reason is I want people to know about what I'm doing for their own sake. You know, I could care less if they're impressed with me or not. I want people to know that I was an everyday kind of guy. Average memory. And here I am talking to you guys as a memory champion and anybody out there, it could be a memory champion. Uh, we all have the capability to do what I can do with my memory.

Nelson: [53:07](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/yYeX3TtVS-MWPmqbiiiQUWbId28Zp1Iqn7AH5XsNl-jEJUwqjfw0fvdj5ttfg2txIRdUyYICdRqgRhkXkBiHXqYOeQk?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=3187.13) And so my purpose is to teach as many people as possible, uh, in the world before I die. How to do this and to make this stuff is common knowledge as possible. Because ultimately I think it's going to help with the future of Alzheimer's. Alzheimer's is scarily even more and more by the day looking like there's no positive like kind of research or results that look like it's going to help anytime soon. And that's really scary. And so the best thing next after that, aside from potentially developing some kind of drug to help with it is some type of memory therapy, which is what I teach in a way. And if people know that, then that's going to be at least something towards improving our situation in this country for Alzheimer's. So Nelson, where can they go to learn these techniques that you're teaching? Yeah, so best thing I would recommend maybe started my website, Nelson dellis.com.

Nelson: [54:04](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/yYeX3TtVS-MWPmqbiiiQUWbId28Zp1Iqn7AH5XsNl-jEJUwqjfw0fvdj5ttfg2txIRdUyYICdRqgRhkXkBiHXqYOeQk?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=3244.2) Um, I have a bunch of links there. You can follow through my blog or link to my youtube channel or go directly to my youtube channel of a bunch of videos on memory techniques, books, of course. I'm of course going to recommend my book as a starting point. Remember it? Uh, that's the name of the book. Also moonwalking with Einstein, like we said, as a is also a good book. It's a little more general, but it's a great fun read about memory and its history. What else? And then some of these training sites, the Mosti, I highly recommend a memory league play on there. There's another one called memo camp, which also has some good memory games. Yeah. Oh, fantastic. I think we'll end on that. Thank you again for being with us here today, Nelson. It's been a blast to have you. Yeah. Thanks so much for having me as well. Thank you. I'll see you soon. Yeah, take care.