

## Memory Loss

There are a number of brain conditions, linked to age or infirmity, which can lead to a gradual loss of memory function, ranging in severity from "Where are my keys?" to "I don't know how to find my way home". Losing a parent, or spouse, to memory loss is heart breaking, when they no longer know who you are and may be very frightened by the presence of an apparent 'stranger' in the house, or are constantly distressed and confused wondering where a loved one is, who has long since passed away.

Wouldn't it be wonderful if this process could be halted, or at least alleviated, by mobile phone technology ? Mobile phones can store a terrific amount of data, photographs and diary events with alerts and reminders.

Neurological specialists already know a great deal about which area of the brain is responsible for each sensory function; sight, hearing, possibly even memory and this knowledge will grow exponentially in the near future.

What if a device rather like the SIM card in our mobile phones could be implanted in the relevant area of the brain and powered by a small battery like those currently used by pacemakers?

Such a device could be uploaded with relevant basic information; photos of family members, friends, home and garden, significant events, weddings, births etc or whatever else is essential to maintain a link with everyday life. The information stored can be discussed with, and chosen by, the recipient while they have the capacity to choose.

The device should be able to be uploaded with new information and memories as they happen and should be done remotely from a phone App. A close family member, or trusted friend, can be legally nominated to undertake this task as part of a Lasting Power of Attorney.

The device could have an on/off switch so that, if so desired, each of us could store information throughout our lives and only switch it on as, and if, it becomes necessary.

Safeguards should be established to ensure that the memories so stored are not corrupted and only used only in the best interests of the recipient and of course third party monitoring is a possibility.

The device could have the capacity to be linked to other devices, which would activate reminders, when to take tablets, have a meal, important appointments to be kept, when the district nurse is calling etc. and reminders can be uploaded from the phone App.

Developing such technology could be of great use to the increasing numbers of people who are likely to be afflicted by memory loss, possibly enabling them to function for much longer in their own homes with a modest amount of help, cherishing recollections of past events and enjoying the presence of friends and family around them.

Technology is developing very quickly in all sorts of ways, this innovation would have a major impact on the quality of life for those who at present may have very little.

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