Original Article

# Architecture of a Capable Mind: A Grade 12 Student's Lived Experience as a Pilot Participant in Memory Palace Training

Hermione Tuddao [1,*]

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**Abstract**

This paper offers a first-person reflective account of my participation as the student pilot tutee in the pre-trial calibration of a memory palace training protocol later tested in a randomized controlled trial among Filipino remote digital professionals. I entered the process as a consistently high-performing student, with report card grades averaging 98-99 across all subjects in the Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) track. My narrative, therefore, is not a story of rescue. It examines what happens to cognition when a mind that already functions well is given, for the first time, an explicit structural framework for what it has been doing intuitively. Across six weeks of adapted memory palace training delivered in 12 one-hour sessions, I observed changes in the precision and confidence of my recall, in the metacognitive resolution with which I could monitor my own encoding, and in the quality of cognitive flexibility I brought to novel examination problems. The paper situates these observations within the cognitive neuroscience of spatial memory, dual-coding theory, executive function research, and adolescent metacognition. The present account suggests that memory palace training may have applications beyond remediation and warrants further investigation among high-achieving learners. The paper closes by proposing future research exploring its potential role in Philippine senior high school pedagogy, particularly in the STEM track.

[1] Cagayan National High School, Tuguegarao City, Philippines
* hermionewtuddao @gmail.com

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## 1. Introduction

The usual story told about mnemonics goes like this. A student who struggles is introduced to a technique that saves them. It is a clean narrative with a clear before-and-after, and the cognitive science literature largely traffics in a structure of intervention, measurement, and improvement.

I did not fit that story when my mentor, Ms. Evangeline Wandag, recruited me as the student pilot tutee in the calibration of a memory palace training protocol. There was no academic distress to resolve. My second-quarter report card for the current school year showed grades of 98 in General Chemistry II, 98 in Introduction to the Philosophy of the Human Mind, and 99 in Practical Research II. I was not flailing. By every conventional measure, I was doing extremely well.

What I lacked, and what six weeks of training exposed with unexpected clarity, was understanding of my own performance: how it actually worked, what was holding it together, and whether the ceiling I had reached was the ceiling that existed or merely the one I had unknowingly accepted. The memory palace protocol showed me that my success had been partly accidental, built on cognitive habits I had never examined, and that examined and reconstructed habits could take me somewhere my instincts alone had not.

Ms. Wandag had designed her memory palace protocol for Filipino remote digital professionals, namely, copywriters and visual artists who managed complex cognitive loads across distributed work environments. She wanted to test its pedagogical clarity and feasibility with a secondary school learner before launching the full randomized controlled trial. I agreed to participate out of curiosity more than need. I had been reading about memory competitions, in which competitors memorize the order of shuffled decks of cards in under 2 minutes, a feat popularized for general audiences by Foer (2011). I wanted to know: Is the cognitive machinery behind those performances accessible to a student?

This paper is my attempt to give that question a careful answer. It draws on six weeks of personal experience, on the notes I kept during and after each session, and on the published literature in cognitive neuroscience and educational psychology that my mentor shared with me throughout the process. I write it as a student, not as a researcher, but I write it with the intention of contributing something the controlled trial alone cannot provide: a phenomenologically detailed account of what this technique does to a mind that did not need fixing, and why that account might matter for how we think about advanced pedagogy in Philippine senior high schools.

### *1.1 The Memory Palace in Cognitive Science: A Brief Account for Context*

The memory palace technique has roots that most contemporary neuroscientists are happy to acknowledge. Yates (1966) traced its formal codification to the ancient Greek poet Simonides of Ceos, who, reportedly, after surviving the collapse of a banquet hall, discovered that he could reconstruct an entire seating arrangement by mentally revisiting each position in the room. The Roman rhetorical tradition, particularly Cicero, adopted and systematized the method for memorizing speeches. For roughly 15 centuries, the method of loci was the primary technology of memory for scholars, theologians, and diplomats who needed to carry vast structures of knowledge without access to portable text. Among mnemonic systems, the method of loci is generally regarded as one of the most powerful and extensively studied techniques because it combines imagery, organization, and spatial structure in a single encoding strategy (Bellezza, 1981).

What contemporary neuroscience has added to this history is a mechanistic account of why it works so reliably. The human hippocampus, the bilateral structure seated in the medial temporal lobe, evolved primarily as a spatial navigator, constructing and updating cognitive maps of physical environments. This same structure is the primary site of episodic memory consolidation, where experience is bound into retrievable, context-tagged records (Maguire et al., 2003). These two functions are not coincidentally housed together. Spatial context and episodic binding are computationally related. The hippocampus processes both because, for most of evolutionary history, where something happened and what happened were inseparable pieces of information.

The memory palace deliberately exploits this architecture. By assigning abstract information, such as a chemical formula, a literary theme, or a statistical concept, to a specific imagined location within a familiar spatial environment, the practitioner routes that information through the hippocampal navigation system. Retrieval then operates not as a search through an undifferentiated store of knowledge but as a spatially guided walk. The learner mentally traverses the palace and encounters encoded information at each location, much as a person re-entering a familiar room immediately notices what is in it (Dresler et al., 2017).

The dual-coding theory by Paivio (1986) provides a complementary theoretical account. Information encoded simultaneously across verbal and visuospatial channels produces redundant memory traces, with each channel constituting an independent retrieval pathway to the same content. Failure in one pathway does not collapse the system because the other remains intact. High-achieving students who rely primarily on verbal encoding through re-reading, summarizing, and reciting are, in dual-coding terms, using only half the bandwidth available to them. This observation, which I will return to in my personal account, proved to be one of the most consequential insights of the six-week pilot.

The executive function literature adds a third dimension. Research by Miyake et al. (2000) established that working memory updating, cognitive set-shifting, and

prepotent response inhibition are the core operations of executive control, and that all three are actively engaged during memory palace encoding. Diamond (2013) later synthesized findings across developmental and clinical populations and described executive functions as trainable, though she noted that transfer across components is more limited and conditional than once hoped. Memory palace practice, on this account, is a structured exercise of the executive apparatus that governs high-level cognition more broadly.

## 2. Methodology

### *2.1 Research Design*

This study employed an autoethnographic case study design. Autoethnography combines personal experience with scholarly analysis, allowing researchers to examine lived experiences within broader social, educational, and theoretical contexts. This manuscript documents my experience as a student pilot participant in a six-week memory palace training protocol originally developed for later testing among Filipino remote digital professionals.

The purpose of this study was not to measure objective cognitive gains or establish causal effects of memory palace training. Rather, it sought to explore and describe the subjective cognitive, metacognitive, and academic experiences associated with participation in the intervention. The focus was therefore phenomenological, emphasizing how I, the participant, experienced and interpreted the training.

### *2.2 Participant and Context*

The participant was a Grade 12 STEM student enrolled at a public secondary school in the Philippines and served as the pilot tutee for her mentor's memory palace training protocol. Prior to participating, she consistently achieved academic grades of 98-99 in STEM subjects. The pilot phase was conducted to evaluate the feasibility, clarity, and instructional flow of the protocol before its implementation in a larger randomized controlled trial involving adult participants.

### *2.3 Data Collection*

Data consisted primarily of reflective notes and journal entries I recorded throughout the six-week intervention period. Notes were written during and after training sessions and focused on perceived changes in learning strategies, retrieval experiences, study habits, metacognitive awareness, confidence, and academic performance. Additional reflections were recorded during preparation for examinations and after actual classroom assessments in which the memory palace technique was actively used.

### *2.4 Data Analysis*

My reflective notes and journal entries were analyzed using a thematic analysis. Following repeated readings of the collected reflections, I identified recurring patterns and experiential themes, which I then grouped and refined. Four dominant themes emerged from my analysis: retrieval precision, executive flexibility, metacognitive resolution, and self-efficacy. These themes provided the organizational framework for the Results and Discussion section.

It is worth noting that the study involved a single participant and relied on self-reported reflections, so the findings are intended to provide descriptive insight into lived experience rather than generalizable evidence regarding the effectiveness of memory palace training.

### *2.5 Researcher Positionality*

An important consideration in interpreting this account is my dual role as both participant and author. My mentor provided me with scholarly literature on cognitive neuroscience, educational psychology, and the theoretical foundations of the method of loci. Consequently, I entered the training with prior knowledge regarding the outcomes and mechanisms that researchers have associated with memory palace practice. This exposure may have influenced how I interpreted and described my experiences.

Rather than attempting to eliminate this influence, the present paper openly acknowledges it. The account should therefore be understood as an informed phenomenological reflection rather than a naive description of experience. Readers are encouraged to interpret the findings with this potential source of bias in mind.

### *2.6 Six Weeks Inside the Protocol: What I Experienced*

**Weeks One and Two: The Discomfort of Making the Implicit Explicit.** The first session was not what I expected. My mentor did not begin with memory feats or impressive demonstrations. She asked me to close my eyes and describe our school building. Not its general layout but the specific sensory texture of each location. The sound of the corridor near the flagpole at midday. The angle at which afternoon light seeps into the classrooms. The configuration of the chairs in our classroom. I could answer these questions. What unsettled me was that I had never been asked to answer them before, and that I had never asked them of myself.

This was the first genuinely new cognitive experience for the pilot: the act of deliberately attending to spatial and sensory detail that I had been processing automatically and discarding as irrelevant. My mentor explained that this attention was not incidental to the technique but constitutive of it. A spatial environment functions as a memory palace only insofar as the practitioner has bothered to notice it, encoding it with enough distinctiveness to make each location a reliable retrieval anchor. A

vague mental space produces vague recall. Precision of environment produces precision of memory.

By the end of the second session, I had constructed a memory palace using our school buildings and placed seven items at seven locations, each item an image representing a concept from my Statistics unit on sampling distributions. When I retrieved them two days later, all seven were present and in sequence. The experience was not dramatic, but it was telling. I had always been able to recall material I had studied repeatedly. I had rarely been able to recall material I had placed once, deliberately, in an organized spatial structure. The difference in cognitive effort between these two modes of retrieval was striking.

**Weeks Three and Four: Information Transformation and the Limits of Verbal Habit.** The middle sessions introduced what my mentor called information transformation, or the conversion of abstract or propositional content into concrete, spatially placeable images. For a Chemistry unit on reaction kinetics, I encoded activation energy as a steep hill at the corridor junction near the STEM faculty room, with a boulder being pushed uphill by an exhausted janitor. The activation energy of a catalyzed reaction became the same hill with a paved ramp installed alongside it. Le Chatelier's principle became a scene in the gymnasium: a tug-of-war team that, when reinforced on one side, immediately caused the rope to shift, with the equilibrium visibly re-establishing itself.

What this phase exposed was something I found genuinely humbling. Throughout my academic life, I had been almost entirely a verbal encoder. My study methods consisted of reading, re-reading, annotating, and summarizing, all of which are linguistic operations performed on linguistic content. I was good at this. My grades reflected the fact that I was very good at this. But I was good at it the way a person is good at using one hand: capable, practiced, and entirely unaware that the other hand existed.

The construction of vivid, absurd, spatially embedded images for abstract content felt initially awkward because, by the standards of serious academic work, it seemed frivolous. I had been trained, implicitly and explicitly, to treat the verbal-abstract form of knowledge as the legitimate form and visual-concrete representations as supplementary at best. Paivio's (1986) dual-coding framework reframes this entirely. The visual-spatial channel is not a concession to learners who cannot manage the verbal one. It is an independent and equally legitimate cognitive system, and the combination of both is far more powerful than either alone.

This emphasis on vivid and unusual imagery is consistent with classic psychological analyses of mnemonic systems, which identified distinctive imagery and organized spatial structure as central components of the method of loci's effectiveness (Bower, 1970).

**Weeks Five and Six: Application Under Actual Examination Conditions.** The final two weeks involved deliberate application of the technique to real content in actual examinations. I constructed a palace for the principles of different philosophers and mapped their characteristics to the corners of our classroom, with key examples

unfolding there. For my Practical Research II examination, the steps of scientific inquiry were placed along the staircase from the ground floor to the third floor: the research problem at the entrance landing, the theoretical framework at the first turn, and the methodology in the alcove near the STEM faculty office.

During the examinations themselves, I used the technique actively for the first time in a live assessment context. Navigating a mental palace during a test is not the same as doing so in a quiet rehearsal session. There is genuine pressure, time constraints, and the ambient anxiety of evaluation. Even so, the spatial retrieval cues proved, somewhat to my surprise, more robust under these conditions than my usual verbal rehearsal. Where verbally memorized content sometimes felt uncertain at the edges (a formula that might have a coefficient of 2 or possibly 3 or an artwork that might have originated from Region 1 or 2), spatially encoded content arrived with a quality of locatedness that I can only describe as felt certainty. The encoding was more committed.

My post-protocol grades remained in the same range of 98s and 99s, but this stability conceals something the numbers cannot show. The cognitive experience of earning those grades had changed. The effort was different in character, not in quantity. Where my previous examination performance had sometimes rested on a slightly anxious recitation of rehearsed verbal chains, this one rested on a confident spatial walk through organized, distinctly encoded knowledge. The outputs were similar. The underlying architecture was not.

## 3. Results and Discussion

### *3.1 On What Actually Changed: Retrieval Precision, Not Retrieval Frequency*

The change I noticed most concretely was not in how much I remembered but in how cleanly I remembered it. High-achieving students in verbally intensive educational systems tend to develop a compensatory skill, namely, the ability to reconstruct plausible answers from partial retrieval. When you have processed a great deal of information and reviewed it repeatedly, you can often produce a correct answer not because you have retrieved the exact target content but because you have narrowed the possibilities sufficiently that confident inference fills the gap. This is a functional strategy and it produces high marks. It is also, in a meaningful sense, not full recall.

Memory palace encoding changes the retrieval mechanism. The spatial locus functions as a highly specific cue that directs the retrieval system toward a particular location rather than prompting a broad associative search. Legge et al. (2012) demonstrated that the method of loci can be acquired quickly in either conventional or virtual environments, with both formats producing memory performance superior to that under no-strategy control. McCabe (2015) showed comparable effects in a brief classroom demonstration. What I experienced subjectively aligns with their accounts. The content at each locus arrived not through reconstruction but through something

closer to recognition, which I would describe as the difference between calculating an answer and simply seeing it.

### *3.2 Executive Flexibility: Transfer Beyond the Trained Content*

The more unexpected change was cognitive. In the weeks following the protocol, I noticed a quality change in how I approached problems I had not seen before, particularly the extended-response and open-ended items that appear near the end of competitive examinations and university entrance tests. These items do not reward retrieval. They reward the capacity to notice structural similarities between a novel problem and familiar conceptual territory and to import relevant knowledge across that structural bridge flexibly. This capacity, sometimes called far transfer in the cognitive psychology literature, is precisely what rote rehearsal strategies do not cultivate.

Diamond's (2013) synthesis of executive function research is instructive here. The core executive operations are not domain-specific skills; they are domain-general cognitive tools that influence performance across all tasks requiring deliberate cognitive control. Memory palace encoding appears to engage several of these processes. The practitioner must update a dynamic mental model of the palace as new items are placed, shift between abstract content and concrete imagery, and inhibit the tendency toward shallow encoding.

My subjective experience during and after the protocol was that I approached unfamiliar academic problems with greater cognitive flexibility and organization than before. Notably, while this perception aligns with theoretical accounts of executive functioning, the present study did not include objective measures capable of demonstrating far-transfer effects or executive function improvement. Consequently, these observations should be interpreted as phenomenological experiences rather than evidence of verified cognitive enhancement.

### *3.3 Metacognitive Resolution: Seeing the Mechanism*

Flavell's (1979) foundational account of metacognition distinguishes between metacognitive knowledge, which is what a person knows about cognition in general, and metacognitive monitoring, which is the real-time awareness of how one's own cognitive processes are currently performing. High-achieving students often have a degree of metacognitive knowledge. They know that retrieval practice is more effective than passive re-reading, or that spaced study outperforms massed review. What they frequently lack is high-resolution metacognitive monitoring, that is, the ability to observe in the moment of study whether a given encoding attempt is likely to support successful retrieval.

The memory palace technique generates unusually direct metacognitive feedback. When an image is vivid, specific, and well-placed in the spatial environment, the practitioner knows it immediately. There is a felt sense of the encoding having taken place. When an image is vague, generic, or does not connect

naturally to its locus, that too is immediately apparent. The technique makes the quality of encoding legible in a way that verbal rehearsal rarely does. A student can re-read a chapter 10 times without having any reliable sense of whether those re-readings have produced retrievable knowledge, whereas a student placing images in a memory palace receives continuous, direct feedback on the quality of each encoding event.

By the fourth week of the protocol, I had developed something I can only describe as metacognitive sensitivity to my own study sessions. While reviewing material for any subject, I could tell whether I was encoding with sufficient depth and distinctiveness to support reliable recall under examination pressure. This was genuinely new. Before the training, I had studied on my own. Afterward, I studied by calibration. The difference in efficiency was considerable.

### *3.4 Self-Efficacy: Confidence Grounded in Mechanism*

Bandura (1997) identified four sources of self-efficacy, of which enactive mastery experience (direct, successful execution of a task) is the most influential. For high-achieving students, a long record of past successes generates real but partly atmospheric confidence. It rests on the accumulated evidence that things have gone well before rather than on a clear sense of how the next performance will be produced. What the memory palace protocol provided was confidence of a more specific kind: the experience of executing an understood mechanism in real time, and knowing that the mechanism exists and how to deploy it.

The difference is meaningful under novel conditions: unfamiliar examination formats, subjects taken for the first time, and competitive contexts where accumulated history offers no particular guarantee. Confidence based on past results is vulnerable to disruption precisely when it is most needed, because novel conditions break the continuity of the record on which it rests. Mechanism-grounded confidence, the knowledge that one possesses a reliable cognitive tool and knows how to use it, is more portable. It travels into unfamiliar territory because it does not depend on that territory resembling the past.

I noticed this difference during the first examination, in which I used the memory palace actively. The content was familiar. The examination format was not. My historical confidence in Chemistry was, in principle, high, but the novel format introduced a genuine moment of uncertainty at the start of the test. What steadied me was something else. I knew, specifically and concretely, where the relevant knowledge was: in the third locus of the palace I had built for the kinetics unit, behind the boulder and the tired janitor. That spatial specificity was stabilizing.

### *3.5 The Science Behind the Experience*

The neuroimaging evidence that most directly illuminates what I experienced is Dresler et al.'s (2017) study of mnemonic training and brain network reorganization.

Using functional magnetic resonance imaging (fMRI), they showed that six weeks of memory palace training, a duration essentially identical to this pilot, produced both substantial improvements in recall performance and measurable changes in resting-state connectivity between the hippocampus, the medial prefrontal cortex, and regions associated with visuospatial processing and attention. These connectivity changes persisted at four-month follow-up, substantially outlasting the training period. The brain was not merely performing a new trick. It had reorganized to perform it more naturally.

Kondo et al. (2005) had earlier documented specific prefrontal changes associated with memory strategy use, showing, via functional MRI, that deliberate mnemonic encoding activates dorsolateral prefrontal cortex regions implicated in working memory management and cognitive control. By the time a student reaches Grade 12, these regions are still undergoing significant late-adolescent maturation. This developmental context matters. The adolescent prefrontal cortex is not a diminished adult prefrontal cortex; it is an actively developing one, and there is good reason to believe that structured cognitive training during this period produces effects that are especially durable at the neurological level.

Kane and Engle (2002) offered a prefrontal account of working memory that makes sense of what I experienced in terms of gains in cognitive flexibility. Their individual-differences research established that working memory capacity predicts performance on fluid intelligence tasks not through storage alone but through the executive attentional control that working memory exercises, specifically the capacity to maintain task-relevant representations active in the face of interference. Memory palace encoding is, structurally, a sustained exercise in this kind of attentional control. The practitioner must hold a spatial environment in mind, actively maintain its structure across the encoding of multiple items, and resist interference from irrelevant associations. Six weeks of this exercise constitute, on their account, genuine training of the executive attentional machinery rather than mere encoding practice.

### *3.6 Implications for Philippine Senior High School Pedagogy*

The Philippine STEM senior high school curriculum is cognitively intensive by design and by necessity. The subjects demanded of Grade 11 and 12 students (General Chemistry, Statistics and Probability, Pre-Calculus, General Physics, Practical Research, and the cluster of required core subjects) represent a knowledge architecture of considerable complexity. Students are expected to retain and apply large volumes of precisely formulated content while simultaneously developing research competencies, preparing competitive university applications, and managing the social and emotional pressures that are simply a feature of late adolescence.

The default cognitive strategy for most of these students is rote rehearsal, supplemented by color-coded notes. This is not a failure of effort or intelligence. It is a failure of instruction. Students are routinely taught what to learn and assessed on whether they have learned it. They are almost never taught how the machinery of

learning works or given explicit frameworks for managing their own encoding and retrieval. The result is a population of students who work very hard and understand very little about what they are actually doing when they study.

My own case suggests that this gap is present even at the highest levels of academic performance. I was earning 98s and 99s while relying on cognitive habits I had never examined. The memory palace protocol did not materially change my grades, but it changed what those grades rested on and what I know myself capable of reaching for in contexts more demanding than a quarterly school examination. McCabe (2015) demonstrated that even a single classroom demonstration of the method of loci produces measurable gains in recall performance and self-reported strategy use. Legge et al. (2012) found that virtual environments support memory palace construction as effectively as physical ones, meaning a student with a tablet and an Internet connection has access to the same training infrastructure that produced the results in Wandag's (2025) adult professional study.

The randomized evidence base specific to Filipino adolescent learners does not yet exist, and I am one student, not a sample. What I can offer is a documented, theoretically grounded account of the mechanism operating in a specific educational context, alongside a call for the controlled studies that would produce the population-level evidence needed for systemic policy. That call is urgent. The cognitive resources available to senior high school students in the Philippines are not being fully developed by the instructional practices currently dominant in the system. The method of loci is one well-evidenced, low-cost, culturally portable strategy that could change this. The research to confirm it at scale is both feasible and overdue.

### *3.7 Limitations*

This study has some limitations that should be considered when interpreting its findings. First, the study involved only one participant, so generalizing to other students is inaccurate. The purpose of the paper is to provide a detailed account of lived experience rather than population-level evidence regarding effectiveness.

Second, the participant entered the intervention as a high-achieving Grade 12 STEM student with consistently high academic grades ranging from 98 to 99. Students with different academic backgrounds, learning needs, motivational profiles, or cognitive strengths may experience memory palace training differently.

Third, the intervention was conducted under the direct guidance of her mentor, who also provided scholarly literature on the method of loci and its theoretical foundations. This may have influenced participant expectations and shaped the interpretation of experiences reported throughout the study.

Fourth, no objective pretest-posttest measures of memory, executive function, metacognition, or academic performance were collected. As a result, the study cannot establish whether actual cognitive changes occurred. The findings are limited to the participant's subjective perceptions and reflections.

Finally, the study was conducted over a relatively short six-week period. Longer-term follow-up would be necessary to determine whether the perceived benefits described in this account persist beyond the immediate training experience.

## 4. Conclusion

I began this pilot not as a struggling student in search of rescue but as a curious one in search of a ceiling. I wanted to know: Is the cognitive machinery described in Foer (2011) accessible to a student? The answer is YES.

What six weeks of memory palace training gave me was not the discovery that I had been wrong about my own performance. By conventional measures, my performance was accurate. It was the discovery that performance and understanding of performance are two separate things, and that the gap between them is where the most significant growth lives.

The cognitive science behind the method of loci is not speculative. Dresler et al. (2017), Maguire et al. (2003), Kondo et al. (2005), and the broader executive function literature (Diamond, 2013; Miyake et al., 2000) have collectively mapped the neurological basis of what I experienced with considerable precision. The hippocampus does what Yates (1966) intuited the ancient Greeks had somehow discovered: it binds information to spatial context in a way that makes retrieval a navigation rather than a search. The dual-coding theory (Paivio, 1986) explains why this is more powerful than verbal encoding alone. Bandura's (1997) account of self-efficacy helps explain why the experience of reliable, mechanism-grounded retrieval produces a more portable confidence than the accumulated record of past success can on its own.

None of this is esoteric. All of it is teachable. The method of loci requires no technology beyond imagination and attention, no resources beyond a familiar space, and the willingness to look at it carefully. What it does require, and what Philippine secondary education has not yet found a systematic way to provide, is instruction. Students need to be taught that this mechanism exists, shown how to activate it, and given enough practice to make it automatic.

I write this paper as a Grade 12 student who did not need the memory palace to pass her examinations. I write this because passing examinations is not, and should not be, the only point of a senior high school education. The point is the development of a mind that knows how to learn, that understands the mechanisms of its own cognition, and that carries into adult life not merely a stockpile of reviewed content but the structural capacity to continue building. The memory palace, taught deliberately and early, is one investment in that capacity.

My experience certainly leaves little doubt that the returns are real. I therefore propose that further research be conducted to explore its potential role in Philippine senior high school pedagogy, particularly in the STEM track.

The memory palace technique is a discipline of thought at its core, one that might help foster what Einstein purportedly called the true purpose of education: "not the learning of facts, but the training of the mind to think."

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**Conflict of Interest Statement**

The author declares no conflict of interest.

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