



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

*Cathryn Jakobson Ramin*

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

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

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

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

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