

# Trust makes you delusional and that's not all bad

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Trust fools you into remembering that your partner was more considerate and less hurtful than he or she actually was.

New research from Northwestern University and Redeemer University College (Ontario, Canada) is the first to systematically examine the role of trust in biasing memories of [transgressions](#) in romantic partnerships.

People who are highly trusting tended to remember transgressions in a way that benefits the relationship, remembering [partner](#) transgressions as less severe than they originally reported them to be. People low on trust demonstrated the opposite pattern, remembering partner transgressions as being more severe than how they originally reported them to be.

"One of the ways that trust is so good for relationships is that it makes us partly delusional," said Eli J. Finkel, co-author of the study and professor of psychology at Northwestern.

Laura B. Luchies, lead author of the study, said the current psychological reality of your relationship isn't what actually happened in the past, but rather the frequently distorted [memory](#) of what actually happened.

"You can remember your partner as better or as worse than he/she really was, and those biased memories are important determinants of how you think about your partner and your relationship," she said.

Researchers have long known that trust is crucial to a well-functioning

relationship.

"This research presents a newer, deeper understanding," Finkel said. "It reveals that trust yields [relationship](#)-promoting [distortions](#) of the past."

Said Luchies, assistant professor of [psychology](#) at Redeemer University College: "If you talk to people who really trust their partner now, they forget some of the negative things their partner did in the past. If they don't trust their partner much, they remember their partner doing negative things that the partner never actually did. They tend to misremember."

**More information:** "Trust and Biased Memory of Transgressions in Romantic Relationships" was published online in the *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*.

Provided by Northwestern University

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