Every time the family gathers at my grandmother's house, the conversation will drift to the past and before we know it, every one will be caught in their own memories and try to share some pleasant anecdotes. In such occasions my grandmother is the one who does most of the talking, but just before she begins narrating one of her life's episodes or after she finishes one story she will close her eyes, lift her chin, tilt her head, smile and say with a sigh "the good old days". Every time I hear those words, I say why does every one always appreciate the past. Is the past really better than the present? Were the so-called old days all good?

Although every one might have different reasons, for my grandmother, what makes her past good is that all she remembers are the memories she treasured not the bad incidents or the mistakes she had done in the past. Every time she recalls those incidents she will have a smile because in relation to the present she would have done things differently due to maturity, experience or knowledge and that makes the old days honest and genuine days of ones life. She believes that majority of the time, people recall past incidents that are beneficial for the present, incidents that can lift one's spirits and make him/her smile.

The past also seems better depending on how it is told, and majority of the time people romanticize history leaving or "cutting out" all the bad memories. Take for example, a grandmother telling a story to her grandchildren; she will tell a story about the times when people used to care for each other, when everyone had enough and all the resources were plenty and available to all. She will never tell her grandchildren the times when famine or drought hit, when there used to be no transportation and people had to carry their sick and other similar stories. She will "cut" and "edit" the scenario to her grandchildren so they will view the past as "good old days".

No one wants to dwell in past mistakes and regrets, because if we do, we might have the tendency to lose the present too and as a result we choose to recall the good old memories and forget all about the bad ones.
According to a Journal published in August 2009, by Leaf Van Boven, Katherine White, and Michaela Hub on Experimental Psychology, people experience emotions from the past more strongly than emotions from the present, and that makes the past seem more intense than the present.

Memory is the mental capacity to recall or recognize past experiences, and anyone of us would like to recall things, which are beneficial to the moments, or incidents that lift our spirits since what we will restore in our treasure chest is in our choice. We wouldn't store things that make us worry and regret about past mistakes and wishing it hadn't happened wouldn't undo the things that have already past as a result the only choice we have is to forget such incidents and keep the good ones only. Psychologists suggest that negative thoughts about the past will keep coming back now and again, and unless we are occupied with other useful healthier thoughts, they can settle in for a very long time. Feeding the brain with encouraging and fun ideas and memories when that 'thing' returns can be so very effective in ridding the agonizing regrets for the long haul.

Take an example when a friend breaks up with you or departs and loses contact, during those times all you want to think and remember is the times when you spent quality times with this friend not the moments where you two argued and fought. In doing so, we are feeding our brain only the good thoughts which are healthier and save our selves from the agonizing misery. After all, as the saying goes "letting go does not mean giving up it means moving on". It might be the hardest things to forget and forgive bad experiences but letting go is not quitting rather it is accepting. As such, we will only recall only the good memories, which bring a smile to our lips and say "the good old days" even if we know that it is not entirely true.