Caught in the Detail:  
Longitudinal relations between adolescent turning point memories and growth in depression

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The role of autobiographical memory in the development and maintenance of psychopathology is increasingly recognised. We investigated a novel question, whether the amount of episodic information in adolescents’ personal narratives is concurrently and longitudinally related to depression. We elicited narratives about life turning points from 132 adolescents and again, one year later (age 16 years at T1). Narratives were coded for episodic detail (reflecting re-experiencing of the event) and semantic detail (reflecting general autobiographical knowledge). Contrary to previous findings with clinical samples, higher levels of episodic information at T1 were related to greater depression and predicted depression growth over time. Post hoc analyses showed that this relationship was moderated by other narrative qualities (event and resolution valence) and rumination. Our findings highlight, first, the importance of autobiographical memory in understanding the longitudinal development of youth psychopathology, and second, the problematic interaction of memory, rumination, and mood.