

Appendix III – The Tax Rate for Grudges and Resentments

Judah Pollack and Olivia Fox Cabane elude to recovering unproductive brain bandwidth in their May 2015 Fast Company article called *Your Brain Has A “Delete” Button—Here’s How To Use It*. My understanding of their work is that our brain’s *in-use* neurons cluster together to hold thoughts, memories, and action plans, and that these clusters are powered by proteins within the connections (synaptic connections) among the neurons. When my thoughts within the clusters are ignored, the proteins in the connectors start to build-up instead of being consumed by continuing to power the thought clusters. After the protein build-up becomes significantly large enough (because I no longer care about a particular problem or grudge), microglial cells sense that these thoughts must not be important because there is too much protein, and come in and bond with the proteins to sever the neuron connections and free these neurons up for better uses – for more productive thoughts via brand new connections to new or other clusters.

When I hold a grudge what I am really doing is activating a cluster of my brain’s neurons and fueling that cluster with proteins from some neuron connectors – this means that I am also preventing a signal to allow this cluster or thinking capacity to be severed and made available for making my life better in other ways...it means that the person I am resenting is actually still causing damage to me by holding me back from becoming more and better.

My brain is on a pretty tight budget already because I will always have an unlimited amount of needs to go with limited cognitive resources. If this was a money problem instead of a brain problem, my resentment would be a luxury – it would be like me driving a new SUV and eating beans and dogfood to do so. Worse than that, the person who I resent can now look to me as an example of being the idiot who has all the time in the world to eat beans and dogfood, because I can’t afford the gas for my luxury either.