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# ARTICLES

Public Apology to My Brain



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Dear Brain



I feel you and I have been at each other's throats for too long. In recent years we have become estranged through what antiquity termed melancholia but my doctor calls depression. We have blamed each other for travesties and tragedies which have beset us in recent months, but the time has come to clear the air, to make a fresh start, draw a line under our differences and see if we can't rebuild our symbiotic relationship, for the good of us both.

The first thing I would like to apologise for is the damage and infirmity I no doubt caused you through my pre-school obsession of banging my head on hard surfaces such as pavements and brick walls. Such a despicable act of cranial carnage was fuelled, as my parents would say by frustration caused by high levels of intelligence. I wanted to talk before I could form basic sounds, I wanted to walk before I could stand, run before I could walk and write a novel before I could write. My only real defence for this, dear Brain, was that I didn't know you were in there.

I would like to express my heart-felt regret that I have filled you with such pointless crap that you have been left with little space for essential, or even worthwhile, things. How, for example, could I fill you with such scenes of revulsion as the time Mrs Donald, the RE teacher with breasts the size of two Christmas turkeys, leant over my table at school and my eyes were unfortunate enough to catch not only an extra acre of cleavage but also a glimpse of a nipple surrounded by a gruesome garnish of tashsome titty hair. Why should I pollute you with such pointless facts as knowing the entire starting line-up for the England versus Germany semi-final in the 1990 world cup in Turin. When am I likely to need that information? And yet I stubbornly cling onto it while being completely unable to remember crucial things like my pin code, mobile phone number or my blood type.

I know I could have treated you better. While I have tried to feed you on the health foods of Socrates, Aristotle, Shakespeare, Proust, Rudyard Kipling, E.M. Forster, Beethoven, Mozart, Vaughan Williams, Picasso, Dali, Munch, Wilfred Owen, Siegfried Sassoon, John Donne, Arthur Miller and others of such ilk, I am aware that I have sullied your time in my stupid little head with the cultural equivalent to Big Mac – Huey Lewis & The News, Kylie Minogue, Fifty Shades of Grey, Honey I Shrunk the Kids, OK Magazine, Rolf Harris and Neighbours.

However, while I will take a great deal of responsibility for the differences which have arisen between us, I think it only fair that you also acknowledge your shortcomings too. For example, why do you give me an erection when I drive over a cattle grid? Surely for an organ which can take in the complexities of Proustian philosophies and women's mood swings one would expect you to be able to tell the difference between a beautiful woman and agricultural rumble strip. I know that your defence would be that the penis has a mind of its own (indeed the penis does extend from the scrotum which could only be described, as the Big Yin once said, as a hairy brain) however why then do you find the need to make me



name each of my immediate family members (including pets) before I call the right one. I have been embarrassed beyond belief when calling my eldest son to dinner, “Gary... Paul... Steve... Fido... uhm, Tiddles!”

But enough is enough. It is time to put aside our differences and try to live together in the same pot-bellied body.