

Dealing With Rejection

When we put ourselves in a position to be vulnerable to another person's opinion, we risk rejection.

Sometimes the risk is very small. Example: I tell a joke but my audience doesn't laugh. They look at me like I am speaking a language they don't understand. What does this mean? Do they reject my joke? Do they reject me? Maybe they don't share my sense of humor. Maybe they don't understand the joke. Maybe it's just not a good joke or maybe I need to learn how to deliver jokes. There are so many variables!

When I'm standing there in the silence, however, I find it hard to think of anything but "I blew it." or "I failed." I may even internalize these words and start to feel pretty rotten; as if I am incapable or unappealing. I told the joke to have fun and win approval; instead I feel deflated and rejected.

When I take a much larger risk, such as applying for a job, an apartment or a loan - where I've invested so much more of myself (time, information, dedication, hope) – the stakes are much higher. I may become discouraged when I hear 'we've chosen another applicant', 'we've rented the apartment to another person', or just plain 'no'. Again, it's hard for me to not internalize it. But just as in the case of the joke, there may be many variables that I am not considering. At this crucial time, I must remember to believe in myself and continue to pursue my goal.

It is hard to stay positive when we internalize rejection; yet that is exactly what we must do to persevere to our goal. When we feel defeated, we would be wise to remember that we have taken many risks in the past and have been successful. We must risk failure and rejection to feel the power of success. It is both scary and exhilarating!

Consider using these tools to keep your perspective as favorable as possible:

- First, remember you are important! Do not let a rejection from any person or group lead you to believe you are not creative, intelligent or valuable.
- Be open to the possibility of rejection or criticism as the push you need to make changes or improve your approach. Find ways to be positive. Positivity is magnetic!
- Consider the source. If you are doing what you believe is the right and best thing for you, keep doing it. We know that some people are just cruel and feel power when they cause others to feel bad. It's okay to be rejected by them.
- Keep focused on the big picture. Don't let minor set backs keep you from achieving your goals.
- Believe in yourself! If you don't believe in yourself, how can you expect others to believe in you? There are so many things that are special and incredible about you; don't forget what they are!
- Remember to not take feedback or rejection personally; it is simply one point of view.
- Find your gratitude. Be grateful for opportunity. Be grateful for allowing yourself to FEEL. (This is really difficult!) Be grateful for the freedom to create your life, even though it may be challenging. Be grateful for critics. If it wasn't for them, we would not learn about ourselves.
- This is an opportunity to build resilience. Getting through difficult challenges makes you stronger and more capable for your next challenges. Summon your fighting spirit that says "I will not quit"!
- Persevere! Keep up the good work. Remember that you are the driver here. YOU are the only one that can get you to your goal or through your challenge.