

Seven Steps To Handling Rejection

by Vicki St. Clair

Bless him. Didn't have the heart to tell my hunky-honey that the letter he was waving in my face probably wasn't even read by the executive producer whose signature wished him a dynamic and prosperous future.

"Don't let this stop you," the letter ended "... we look forward to hearing more of your music in the future." Like many of us when faced with rejection, he'd skipped over the formulaic middle paragraph, and zoned in on the bits that gave him the slightest hint of hope that this wasn't "just a standard rejection letter." After all, that was a real ink signature ... wasn't it?

No one actively seeks rejection, but let's face it, whether you're a working creative, a singleton on the dating scene, or a

new job seeker, rejection is going to happen. According to psychologists worldwide, it's the number one fear of mankind. That and public speaking. And when you're emotionally attached to a particular piece of work or specific outcome, a resounding "Thanks but no thanks" is that much harder to swallow.

After our initial whining session, how do we make rejection more palatable? If I had the answer to that I'd no doubt make a quick million. But here are seven tools that work for myself and others who are, alas, well-experienced in handling rejection!

• **Don't automatically assume you did something wrong, or could have done something differently to influence the outcome.**

That may be true in some cases, but for the most part rejection occurs due to a lack of confluence between you or what you're presenting, and time-place-demand and/or desire. The stars were aligned, or they weren't. Your work landed on the right desk on the right day, or it didn't. You met the person who set your heart on fire when you were both willing and available, or you didn't.

• **When a loved or desired one rejects you with, "It's not you, it's me," believe them.** It is *all* about

them. For example, what they're really saying is something like this: "You no longer/never did/never will (...whatever) fit my needs/expectations/desires." So it is all about them, at

least at that moment.

• **When a potential employer rejects you, see it as positive.** As a manager, I interviewed hundreds, if not thousands, of potential employees, and it simply boils down to a person being a good fit for the job/team, or not. And sometimes, people just make bad or ill-informed choices. Doesn't mean there's anything wrong with you or the employer. Bottom line: you want a mutually beneficial match, so accept that this is for the best.

• **When an editor, producer, or gallery rejects your work, resubmit the piece to another pre-selected market the same day.** If you have a good relationship with the rejecter, you can ask them why it didn't fit their needs if — and only if — you did your homework and didn't present them with something

they'd already featured a couple of months ago.

• **Take inflammatory emotion out of the situation.** The rejection is not meant to hurt or injure you as a person, or to crush your creative genius. It's not personal. If you think it is, read number one again!

• **Make the Law of Averages work for you by checking off the rejection as another step closer to getting a yes.**

• **Don't ever let the fear of rejection stop you from reaching out for what you really want in any aspect of your life.** Our wise elders always say it's not the things they did that they regret; it's the things they did not do!

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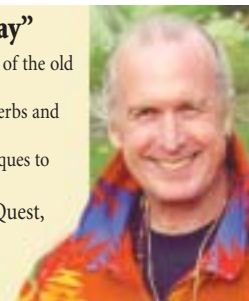
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