



Allure Article – for Sunday, May 2009

Rejection is a Gift

Did I get your attention? You might be sitting there thinking, "Patricia, you are really pushing it! You are just plain crazy with your positivity by calling rejection a gift. Rejection hurts too much to be good for me in any way." I can relate to your viewpoint because I used to feel that way too. All I ask of you this week is that you contemplate the ideas I share. You just never know how your perspective might expand if you do.

A reader emailed recently asking, "How do I tackle rejection?" As I responded I decided that I should devote an entire article to this topic since rejection is such a major and very common aspect of our daily and lifelong experience. It happens to us all, doesn't it?

We experience it when we are young. Parents criticize us – some may even walk out of our lives or force us out of theirs. Friends call us names on the playground and talk about us behind our backs. The deep sting of rejection continues into puberty as our boyfriends and girlfriends leave us. I'm sure you remember your first break-up as if it was yesterday, don't you? Papers we submit are returned to us with low marks and negative comments from the teacher.

Our adult life is full of refusals. Business proposals get tossed aside by potential investors. Our friends and family members mock our dreams. Manuscripts we've written get thrown into a slush pile, never getting a second look. Even minor snubs upset us -- the taxi we desperately need passes us by.

When does this rejection stop?

Guess what. It doesn't. There are 6 billion people on this planet and whether we like it or not, each of us is entitled to his or her opinion. We each have freedom to shape our life experiences and that means we are all making choices every minute of every day. Sometimes the choice made leaves us out. If I take such a choice as a personal rejection, I feel deep pain.

Rejection need not be personal unless we choose to see it that way. As a hiring manager, I often interviewed dozens of candidates for one open position. Though I liked many of them and found their skills impressive, I could hire only one. It wasn't personal.

As a college girl I fell in love with a smart, good-looking athlete. I was certain that he was "the one" for me. However, after a year of dating he backed away. I was devastated. I couldn't understand why he didn't see that we were perfect for each other. Soon after he stopped dating me, he began dating another girl on campus. It took me many tears and much inner work for me to accept his choice.

As I sit here more than 10 years later, I am grateful that he was honest and moved on when he did. I see clearly now that a long-term relationship with him would have limited

both of us. He gave me a gift through that "rejection." If I hadn't taken it to mean there was something wrong with me, I could have saved myself a great deal of grief.

I share these stories with you to encourage you to avoid the needless suffering that I have walked through. Rejection is never personal. If someone rejects me I have come to understand that it is not about me. If a parent or a spouse leaves, it's not because of some lack in you, it's because of *their* own inner issues. I invite you to notice how different you would feel inside if you could accept that as true. I now see that rejection offers me clarity and direction.

Consider the following ideas about rejection and see if any of them might offer you new perspectives to support you in your journey:

1. Rejection is not about you, it's someone making a choice based on their own, deeply felt inner needs and goals. It's futile to try to control another person. People think what they think and want what they want. What we can change is the way we choose to interpret another person's choice and how we respond to them. Each of us here on Earth is entitled to their own journey.
2. Rejection shows us our next opportunities for growth. It guides us to the wounds that we have within that need to be healed. The suffering we feel leads us to greater levels of self-awareness if we choose to learn and grow from the experience. When someone rejects us it shows us how sensitive we are and the ways we are probably still questioning and doubting ourselves.
3. If you don't reject you, nobody else can either. An important key to moving beyond rejection is to learn to love and accept yourself for who you are and where you are in life. If you accept and love yourself fully, would it matter if someone walked out on you? Of course, you might feel loss. Moving through the mourning process might be painful; it need not be devastating. When you are happy with you, people can say or do anything to you and it really doesn't affect you all that much. You listen to their comments as observations. Thank them for their honesty. Smile or shrug, and then move on with your day.
4. Rejection is a gift. Yes, seems strange to say it, but it is actually quite wonderful when someone honestly tells you they aren't interested in you! It opens the door for new things, better-suited friends and partners, and fresh experiences to enter your life. It is a blessing when people tell the truth and say what they are thinking! By doing this, they save us time and energy. I would much prefer someone to be real with me than to pretend that things are a way that they really aren't.

Take time this week to look more closely at the way you experience rejections – the little daily ones and the big ones too. How strong is your emotional reaction when others bypass you? Would you save energy if you didn't take it to heart? If you could see rejection as an

opportunity to move forward with clear direction, how might you feel about recent situations where people have left you out?

As actor Sylvester Stallone once said, "I take **rejection** as someone blowing a bugle in my ear to wake me up and get going, rather than retreat."

If you would like to hear more ideas on how to deal with the unexpected challenges life brings your way, please check out my inspirational video clips shown each Friday morning at 7:35 a.m. on Today on STV (on both Silverbird TV and DSTV.) If you can't catch them on TV, you can see them on www.youtube.com . Just search by my name.

Food For Thought

"Do not waste yourself in **rejection**; do not bark against the bad, but chant the beauty of the good."

Ralph Waldo Emerson

© Patricia G. Omoqui 2009, All Rights Reserved

Patricia Omoqui is an internationally recognized inspirational speaker, life coach and writer. Patricia's mission in life is to inspire people to move beyond fear so they can reach their full potential.

To share your thoughts about this article, please email Patricia at allure@patriciaomoqui.com or visit her at her website: www.patriciaomoqui.com .