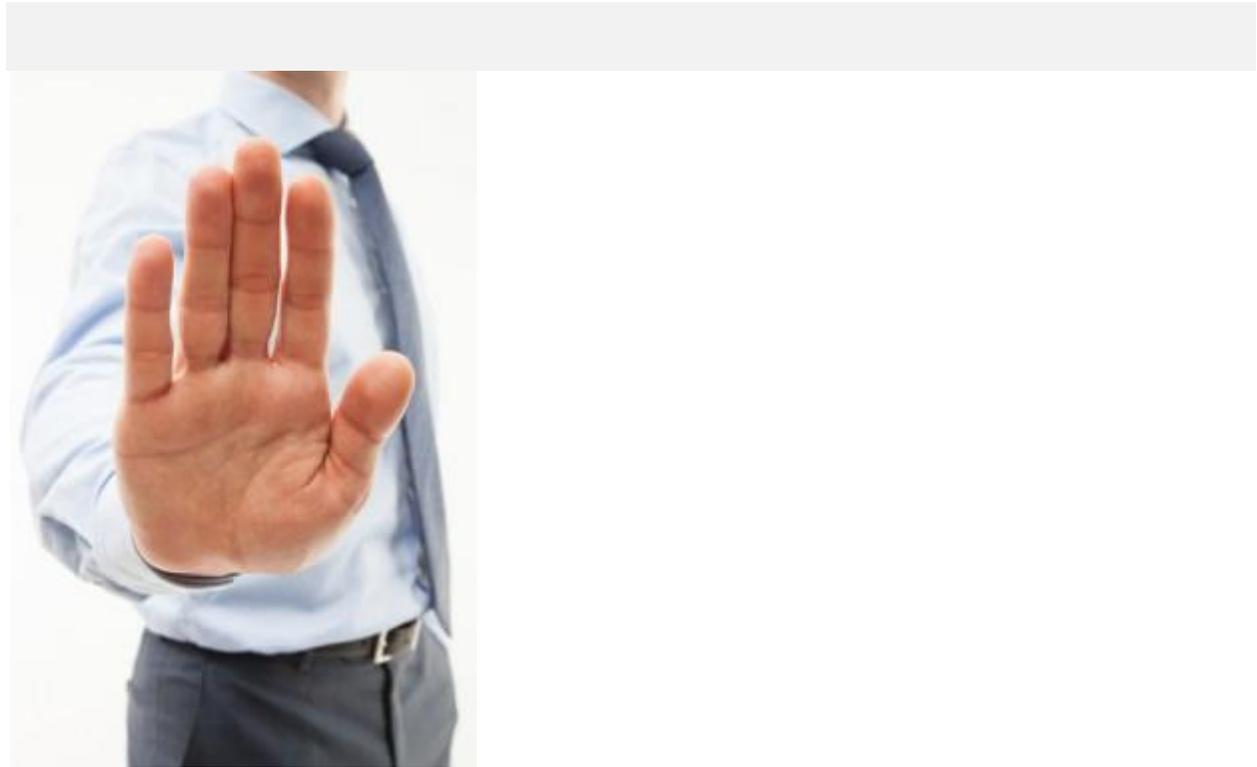


Dealing with Rejection When You Have Depression

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When you're already struggling with depression — a difficult illness that batters your self-esteem — you might take rejection hard. Really hard. Whether you were turned down for a job, excluded from an event or had a disagreement with a friend, the rejection may confirm all the negative things you believe you embody. All the negative things your depression has convinced you that you are.

(Of course, your depression is lying. It creates all sorts of [cognitive distortions](#). But you might not realize it.)

Instead of “Oh, well, I’ll just try again,” rejection feels like “See, I knew this would happen! Why did I even try?” said Josephine K. Wiseheart, MS, a psychotherapist at Oliver-Pyatt Centers, and in private practice in Miami, Fla. “It validates the negative loop [people with depression] have playing on repeat in their brains.”

<http://psychcentral.com/blog/archives/2015/08/06/dealing-with-rejection-when-you-have-depression/>

Similarly, because of depression's negative lens, you might see rejection in situations where there isn't any. People with depression "are hyperaware of that glance to the side, that rushed look, or that frown from another person," said [Amanda Strunin](#), Ph.D, a psychologist specializing in the assessment and treatment of mood disorders.

"[They] may not remain in the situation long enough to find out that the other person likes them, but has a meeting and wants to catch up later. They are often thinking, 'How can I escape this discomfort?' instead of sitting through it."

According to psychologist Julie de Azevedo Hanks, Ph.D, LCSW, people with depression also might interpret a critique of their idea or product as a rejection of themselves versus what it really is: feedback. It's also common for people with depression to catastrophize or ruminate about a situation well after it's occurred, she said.

For instance, Hanks worked with a man who had a history of severe depression. When one of his friends didn't return his call, he interpreted it as a painful rejection. He kept focusing on what he did to offend his friend. He also started worrying that his friend would reject him for good. However, it turns out that his friend was overwhelmed with studying for an important professional exam. He wasn't returning anyone's calls for several days.

If you're having a hard time with rejection, here are six tips for coping healthfully. (Of course, getting your depression treated is first and foremost.)

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