

Overcoming Your Fear of Rejection

Dear Jane,

I have suffered with a paralyzing fear of rejection for most of my life. This leaves me unable to be as assertive in my private and professional life as I would like to be, and sometimes it is crippling. Intellectually I know I shouldn't be so worried about what other people think, but the feelings are still there. How do I overcome this irrational feeling?

When you have a fear that is irrational, you can't sit by the sidelines figuring it out. You need to take small steps towards your fear. What kinds of situations make you worry about rejection? List these. Then put them in order from least fearful to most fearful. Start with your least paralyzing situation and think of one action step you are willing to take that addresses the fear rather than letting it run you. When you have accomplished this, reward yourself in some way. Then take the next small step.

For example, if you are afraid to attend work-related parties but that isn't as frightening as giving a talk in front of your colleagues, pick that one. You could go to the party with a friend. You could give yourself permission to leave after an hour if you're not enjoying it. You could promise yourself you will talk to at least two or three people.

If you still feel crippled, speak with your doctor. There are medications for crippling social disorders. No matter what action you take, acknowledge yourself for your courage. What others may find easy is not easy for you. So give yourself credit for your efforts and remember to reward yourself.

Jane Straus is a trusted life coach, dynamic keynote speaker, and the author of ***Enough Is Enough! Stop Enduring and Start Living Your Extraordinary Life***. With humor and grace, Jane offers her clients and seminar participants insights and exercises to ensure that the next chapter of their lives is about thriving as the unique individuals they have always been and the extraordinary ones they are still becoming. She serves clients worldwide and invites you to visit her site, www.stopenduring.com. Here you will find excerpts from her book, more articles, TV and radio interviews, and clips from her presentations.

She is also the author of ***The Blue Book of Grammar and Punctuation***, www.grammarbook.com, an award-winning online resource and workbook with easy-to-understand rules, real-world examples, and fun quizzes.

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