BBC LEARNING ENGLISH

6 Minute English

Is rejection good for us?

This is not a word-for-word transcript.

Georgie
Hello and welcome to 6 Minute English from BBC Learning English. I'm Georgie.

Neil
And I'm Neil. Don't forget you can find vocabulary, definitions and a worksheet for free on our website, bbclearningenglish.com.

Georgie
So Neil, today we're talking about **rejection**. So, **rejection** means saying no to someone or refusing to accept their idea or suggestion. Neil, how do you feel about **rejection**?

Neil
Well, nobody likes **rejection**. But I think as you get older, you get used to it. And probably it's quite a good thing to experience **rejection**, even if it doesn't feel nice.

Georgie
Yeah, I agree. We can't always get what we want, can we?

Neil
We can't, no. In this podcast, we'll be learning about a new internet trend called **rejection** therapy and how people are using it to help them to be more confident. OK. Let's start with our quiz question, Georgie. Lots of famous people have faced **rejection** in their lives before they became successful, but which of these things did not happen to the animator Walt Disney before he became successful? Was it:

a) he lost his job as an artist,
b) his first business ran out of money, or
c) his first full length film was a failure?

Georgie
I've got no idea, but I'm going to go with a) he lost his job as an artist.

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Neil
OK. Well, we'll find out the answer at the end of the programme.

Georgie
OK Neil. So, most people don't like being rejected, but one thing to try might be something called **rejection** therapy. It's a social media trend where people record themselves talking to strangers and sometimes being rejected.

Neil
OK. That sounds quite interesting, but let's find out how it works in practice. Hannah Gelbart, host of the BBC World Service podcast What in the World, had a go at the trend. Let's see how she got on.

Hannah Gelbart
Hey, can I come sit down at your table?

Stranger
Yeah.

Hannah Gelbart
Hey, how's it going?

Stranger
Good, thank you.

Hannah Gelbart
How's your day gone? Good afternoon. How are you doing? Can I drive your cab? Can I? Can I get behind the wheel?

Cab Driver
Don't be silly!

Hannah Gelbart
Don't be silly...! Coming somewhere else to try and face my fears... maybe do a bit of shopping. I was wondering, can I have a nap in one of these beds? Can I just try it out? Wow – I didn't expect that one to be a yes!

Georgie
Well, it seems like people were pretty nice to Hannah in those examples.

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Neil
Yes. And she talks with psychologist Claudia Hammond about how she felt during the experiment.

Hannah Gelbart
And actually, walking up to the first person, I felt my adrenaline really, really **spiking**. I'm not a **socially anxious** person – I think I'm really confident. But that first thing really scared me. And once I'd done one, the second one **came easier** and the third one came even easier. And you know, by the fourth time I didn't even mind it whether they said yes or no.

Georgie
Hannah says that when she walked up to the first stranger in the video, she felt her adrenaline **spiking**. If something **spikes**, it increases sharply.

Neil
Hannah is not generally a **socially anxious** person. Someone who is **socially anxious** is nervous or worried about speaking to other people.

Georgie
Each time Hannah tried to speak to a new person, she says, it **came easier**. **Come easier** is an informal way to say something is easier to achieve.

Neil
Now, this social media trend is called **rejection** therapy, but it's not a proper form of therapy. It hasn't been tested.

Georgie
And there are some criticisms of the videos because they involve filming your interactions with strangers, which people might not want.

Neil
But people who post the videos say they boost their confidence. So, why do people want to ask for **rejection**?

Georgie
Psychologist Claudia Hammond has some ideas, which she shared with Hannah on the BBC World Service podcast What in the World.

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Claudia Hammond
What we do know is that there is an increase in **perfectionism**. People are more worried now, younger people, about how other people are judging them. And so, I wonder whether that might make people more shy of speaking to strangers – worried that the people will, you know, not **appraise** them in a good way, and so doing something like this to try to counter that might feel like a positive step to people, that they're trying to do something. Also, they're fun to watch.

Neil
Claudia says there's an increase in **perfectionism** among young people. **Perfectionism** is the feeling that everything you do needs to be perfect.

Georgie
Young people are also worried about how people will **appraise** them, which means judge them.

Neil
Deliberately looking for **rejection** might be an extreme way to become more confident, but it can lead to surprising discoveries.

Georgie
Yes, and Hannah found that most strangers she spoke to were friendly and happy to help, so she didn't really experience **rejection** much at all.

Neil
OK. Georgie, I think it's time now for the answer to my quiz question. I asked you which **rejection** Walt Disney didn't experience before becoming successful?

Georgie
Yes, and I went for a) I don't think he lost his job as an artist.

Neil
Well, actually, the answer was c) his first full length film, Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs, was not a failure. It was a huge success.

Georgie
Wow! That was his first film? That's really impressive.

Neil
It is.

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Georgie
OK. Let's recap the vocabulary we learned in this programme, starting with **rejection**, which means saying no or refusing an idea or suggestion.

Neil
The verb **spike** means increase suddenly.

Georgie
Someone who is **socially anxious** is nervous or worried about speaking to other people.

Neil
If something **comes easier**, it's easier to achieve.

Georgie
Perfectionism is the feeling that everything you do needs to be perfect.

Neil
And if you **appraise** someone, you judge them.

Georgie
Once again, our six minutes are up, but you can test what you've learned with the free worksheet on our website, bbclearningenglish.com.

Neil
Thank you for joining us and goodbye.

Georgie
Goodbye.

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VOCABULARY

rejection
saying no to someone; refusing an idea or suggestion

spike
increase suddenly

socially anxious
worried about speaking to other people, or being judged when around others

come easier
be easier to achieve

perfectionism
feeling that everything you do needs to be perfect

appraise
judge

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