



REJECTION IS THE GREATEST GIFT OF THE WORLD

By Simon T. Bailey

Yesterday I received a rejection email. It came from a business agent who had pitched my presentation to one of my industry's premier organizations; she'd given me a shot to share my expertise with the crème de la crème of industry leaders. This is a stage that has been graced by the top one percent of all speakers, thought leaders, and authors in the world; this opportunity would be considered the "TED Talk" of my particular sector. Once you speak for this organization, the rest is history: You essentially print money for the rest of your life. Perhaps that claim is only a legend, but I do know that most of my contemporaries have appeared before this esteemed body.

The rejection email from my agent was short but encouraging: "I'm so sorry. They did not select you this year. Their terrible loss!!! I will suggest you again with my next proposal next year." I wrote back, "This is exciting news. I am so happy you told me that they didn't select me. Now I am going to take my game to the next level." Well, what my agent didn't know was that this is the third year in a row I've been rejected by this particular group. Two other agents had pitched me to the organization in prior years.

In fact, I personally know one of this organization's key decision makers and have wished him a happy birthday over the years. I know some of the folks on the committee and have worked all the angles in an attempt to be accepted into "the club."

Well, I am done trying to fit in. I'm through seeking acceptance. Have you ever felt like you were standing at the bus stop of life, only to watch the bus pass you by and keep going? You find yourself left with a disconcerted look on your face that says, What just happened here?

Even though I responded to the agent's email about the rejection in a matter of seconds and with a positive manner, as reality sank in, the disappointment of not being chosen was unsettling. This experience had taken the wind out of my sails, so to calm myself down I re-read the book, *The Game of Life and How to Play It*, written by Florence Shinn in 1925.

In the book, Shinn makes this powerful statement: "The thing man seeks is seeking him—the telephone was seeking the bell." All of sudden it clicked: It was a *Vuja de* moment that was inviting me to shift from average thinking to brilliant living. I was seeking something that wasn't seeking me. I needed to let it go and open up to what wanted to emerge and, more importantly, what belonged to me.



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But what really struck me about this whole scenario was that, for the last three years, I had submitted my video to the organization with all the bells and whistles their submission criteria required. Before recording the video, I even made sure I was having a good hair day! But no, I had been passed over yet again. Had they spotted spinach in my teeth? Who knows?

I wanted their approval; I sought their validation. I wanted confirmation that I was being invited into the club of rare air to walk among the gods of the speaking industry, and to impress others by being able to say, "I've spoken for the So-and-So Organization."

In my warped mind, I had convinced myself that entry into this organization would be my rite of passage. This would be my golden ticket to fame and fortune. How had I become so intoxicated, inauthentic, and incongruent with who I am and how I operate? The organization that rejected me for the third time has done me a huge favor, because now I am moving on. There are plenty of other fish in the sea. Enough of this crying over spilled milk. In fact, I am skywriting in my mind, "I AM Brilliant"—and guess what? So are you. I didn't need this organization to give me the Good Housekeeping Seal of Approval. I was born in brilliance to be brilliant. In fact, my new name is "O Brilliant One!" (Okay, that's a bit dramatic, over-the-top, and pompous. However, if you don't recognize your own brilliance, then NO ONE ELSE WILL.)

Out of this disheartening situation, here's what I did: I chose to bless the decision-makers of the organization with positive words, and I wished all those other speakers who they had selected a brilliant future. And I encourage you to do the same: Whoever has rejected you this year or in times past, bless them and wish them the best. Send positive vibes their way. You don't need the negative energy you'd otherwise incur, and there is simply too much work to do now.

As we approach another Thanksgiving and Christmas season, we should accept rejection, bless it, and move on. In fact, we should thank the following:

All of those who de-friended you on Facebook. Bless them and wish them a brilliant future.

Thank you to all those who stop following you on Twitter. Bless them, too, and wish them a brilliant future.

Thank you to those who didn't do business with you. Those who rejected your pricing, your proposal, and your value. Be so grateful and thankful that they found their happiness elsewhere.



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Bless all of those who didn't return your call, who ignored your e-mail, deleted your text, or didn't post a comment on your blog.

Bless the company that didn't hire you and wish them a brilliant future.

Bless the homeowner who didn't list his home with you and wish him a brilliant future.

Bless the boss who gave you a less than stellar review. It won't change her, but it will change how you choose to see her.

Thank you, Rejection, because you are an amazing teacher who invites us to look within and decide how we will soar to the next level. My friend Willie Jolley says that "a setback is a setup for a comeback." Boom! There it is.

Give thanks because you are finally waking up to the reality that rejection is the greatest gift in the world.