

Attraction and Rejection (Part 17)

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4.5 Romantic rejection

In contrast to the study of childhood rejection, which primarily examines rejection by a group of peers, some researchers focus on the phenomenon of a single individual rejecting another in the context of a romantic relationship. In both teenagers and adults, *romantic rejection* occurs when a person refuses the romantic advances of another or unilaterally ends an existing relationship. The state of unrequited love is a common experience in youth, but mutual love becomes more typical as people get older.

Romantic rejection is a painful, emotional experience that appears to trigger a response in the caudate nucleus of the brain, and associated dopamine and cortisol activity (Fisher, H., 2006). Subjectively, rejected individuals experience a range of negative emotions, including frustration, intense anger, and eventually, resignation and despair.

Men are significantly more likely than women to react with rage and aggression when rejected. Every year over a million American women are stalked, and the majority are stalked by a former boyfriend, husband, or live-in partner. Eight out of ten women are physically attacked by their stalker. Researchers in a variety of countries have demonstrated that stalkers are more likely to be male, and that male stalkers are more likely to become violent (Meloy, J. R. & Fisher, H., 2005).

One reason why romantic rejection is so common in society is a tendency called *falling upward*. People generally desire mates that are higher than themselves on such characteristics as status and physical attractiveness, but not ones who are lower (Baumeister, R. F. & Dhavale, D., 2001). When someone falls in love with a person who has aspirations that are higher, that love is less likely to be reciprocated, potentially leading to rejection.

5.0 Conclusion

As we have seen, the road to social acceptance is often long. The only way to escape the illusion of social acceptance is to make sure you're not a part of it. A person, who is concerned only with the truth of reality, is the teenager at school who dresses in any clothes he/she likes and forms his/her own opinion regardless what other people think. That person will promote leadership instead of decisions founded upon trends. That person will be a major threat to all people who follow social acceptance, because it takes a lot of courage today to be yourself, but once you reach that goal, a whole new world will open up before you. No more social pressure will keep you down. Instead, you will focus on what's important to your life and let the truth of reality guide you into a better, truly liberated tomorrow.

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