



# Workshop: Rejection

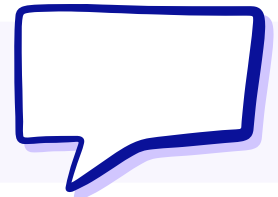
## I SAMPLE LEARNING OBJECTIVES



### LEARNERS WILL BE ABLE TO:

- Identify healthy and unhealthy ways of handling rejection.
- Give examples of how to break up with someone in an empathetic manner.
- Summarize the connections between gender expectations for men and rejection.

## II SAMPLE INTRODUCTION



“For better or for worse, rejection is a universal experience that we all go through. From a show of hands, who here has been rejected? It could be anything from asking someone out to not making it onto a team. Navigating rejection can definitely feel tough at times and like a blow to our confidence. But the truth is that rejection is normal and not everyone gets everything they want. There are healthy ways to deal with getting broken up with and respectful ways of breaking up with someone else. We’re going to talk more about that today.”



## III SAMPLE DISCUSSION QUESTIONS



- What are stereotypes around rejection and breakups that we see from TV and movies?
- Do you think being rejected or broken up with as a man brings up particular feelings or connotations?
- Think of a time in your life you were rejected or broken up with:
  - What are some feelings and emotions that came up for you? How did you handle it in the days afterwards?
  - Did you get support from friends, family or others after? How so? Or, why not?
  - How do you usually react when someone rejects you? Do you accept their decision or try to counter it?
  - Did you learn any lessons from that time? Are there any lessons to be learned from rejection in general? If so, what are some examples?
- Have you ever seen guys react negatively to rejection? What did they do and why do you think they responded that way?
- Have you ever had to reject someone? How did you feel about it? Do you wish you'd done anything differently?



## IV SAMPLE TALKING POINTS



- ▶ The feeling of rejection can come from many places. One common place for men is a sense of loss of control or a sense of failure as a man as they are told that they need to be in the driver's seat at all times.
- ▶ It can be a blow to our confidence when things don't go our way, but it is never okay or helpful to react with defensiveness, personal insults and anger, or even worse violence and revenge.
- ▶ Try to respond with respect. This can be a true show of your character if you're able to respond to rejection with respect and accept the other person's.
  - Remind yourself of your positive qualities.
  - Take some time to reflect.
  - Surround yourself with people you enjoy spending time with and who care about you.
  - Spend time doing activities that you enjoy and that make you feel confident!



## IV SAMPLE TALKING POINTS (CONT.)



- ▶ Consider the saying: “Rejection is redirection!” Rejection gives us a new opportunity to find a better fit for our lives, whether that be a person or job. Reframing rejection in this way can be helpful and can help it serve as a source of personal growth.
- ▶ Rejection is especially hard if we feel that “who we are” is being judged. However, “who we are” can change. Take what you can from the experience and leave behind what is not useful.
- ▶ Having to turn someone down is also not a fun position to be in. Consider these strategies:
  - Be direct with your feelings. Delaying a decision causes more hurt for the other person.
  - Remember to consider how that person may feel. Communicate with them how you would want to be if you were on the receiving end.
- ▶ Right after rejection is a common time for people to lash out and sometimes hurt the other person, either emotionally or physically. Watch out for potential warning signs of abusive behavior like stalking.
- ▶ Let’s work to support our friends and hold them accountable to the standards of integrity that we believe in.


**V SAMPLE ACTIVITIES**

**SCENARIOS ROLE  
PLAY:  
REJECTION**

*Share one scenario at a time. Ask the pairs to practice how they would respond to the scenarios. Ask follow-up questions to prompt deeper reflection on participants actions and feelings. Finally, summarize key ideas or best practices on handling rejection.*

**Sample Scenarios:**

- Person 1 tells Person 2 that they're not interested in pursuing things further with them after going on a few dates.
- Person 1 tells Person 2 that they got cut from the fraternity recruitment process. Person 2 is upset and lashes out verbally at Person 1.

**Sample Discussion Questions:**

- Did your partner respond differently than how you would've in that situation?
- Did you find it challenging to form a response or deliver the rejection?
- How can we approach rejection in the healthiest way possible?

**VIDEO SCREENING &  
DISCUSSION: REJECTION**

*Show the video, "What I learned from 100 days of rejection." Host a discussion with the group.*

**Sample Discussion Questions:**

- Do you feel comfortable or uncomfortable asking for things you know you might not get? Why?
- Did listening to Jiang change your perspective on rejection at all? If so, how?
- What's one thing you've been afraid to do because of fear of rejection? Do you feel more likely to do it after watching this video?



## VI WORKSHOP RESOURCE LIBRARY



- **Video:** Dealing With Rejection: What's the Best Way? - AMAZE Org
- **Video:** Therapist Reacts to Couples Trying to Save Their Relationships - Healthline Mental Health
- **Video:** How To Deal With Rejection - AMAZE Org
- **Article:** A Crash Course In Handling Rejection - One Love Foundation
- **Article:** 6 things to do after a breakup - University of Colorado Boulder
- **Article:** 6 Ways to Maintain Your Mental Health During a Break-Up - One Love Foundation
- **Reddit Thread:** In case you wanted some examples of male entitlement, or why I broke off my relationship
- **Research:** Men, relationships and partner-initiated break-ups: A narrative analysis - Olife, et al.