

Overcoming rejection to get ahead in life

Rejection is probably one of the most depressing words in the English language. Webster defines it as "to refuse; to discard as useless," pretty stern words when you have them thrown at you at one time or another in your lifetime.

I attended a wedding recently and talked at length to a budding screenwriter, and somewhere along the way, we spoke about rejection.

His enthusiasm for his work took a downturn at that point until I pointed out that if I took all the rejection letters that I had received in all my years of writing and taped them all together, I could probably use them as wallpaper to cover a good portion of my living room wall. There were numerous times I wanted to quit and numerous of times when I muttered under my breath, "Who needs this?"

I worked on one of my books for ten years, rewriting it many times and still the doors would not open.

Most depressing of all, somewhere along the way, I ran into a crooked agent who promised me a book contract and instead absconded with a couple of thousand dollars of my savings.

She had duped me and hundreds of other misfortunate authors, but we had a tad of closure when we reported her to the FBI.

Unfortunately, she declared bankruptcy, changed the name of her company, and is still operating today, probably duping a host of new authors who just want a break into the publishing world.

But back to rejection....you all probably know the stories of how Stephen King was rejected hundreds of times until he hit it big with "Carrie" and how William J. Kennedy was rejected by several publishers until one took a chance with his Pulitzer



*As I
see it*

Peg Demarco

Prize winning book, "Ironweed." There are hundreds of other stories, however, about rejection, courage and the ability to take life in stride and keep on trying in this rough and tough world of ours.

"Can't act, can't sing, slightly bald. Can dance a little." These words were spoken many, many years ago by a Hollywood executive following a so-so screen test.

All set to reject the young man who stood nervously in front of him as just another hopeful, someone must have convinced that executive to give the tap dancing fool a chance. Years later, Hollywood embraced the greatest dancer of all time and one of its most beloved stars — Fred Astaire.

Benjamin Franklin once said, "I'm a strong believer in luck and I find the harder I work, the more I have of it."

Years later, when an eager reporter asked John Kennedy how he became a war hero, he quipped, "It was easy. They sank my boat."

I believe that Kennedy would have become a hero regardless of PT-109, but a slight edge does have a way of influencing whose name we remember and whose name we forget.

If you doubt that, just think about how Harry Truman felt when on April 12, 1945, the clear underdog in a presidential race, he found himself elected as the thirty-third president of the United States.

When asked how he felt, Truman replied, "I felt like the moon, the stars and all the planets had fallen on me."

PEG DEMARCO is a local columnist for The News Herald.