How to Be Turned Down and Be Okay with It

Just as it can be very uncomfortable for many people to tell someone “no” when they’re asked to do something, the flipside of that interaction can also be very uncomfortable. When we ask someone for something and we’re turned down, it can be a very stressful experience. While many of us don’t want to be turned down for something that we want or need, being turned down is a fact of life, but here are some suggestions to help you feel okay about not getting what you want.

1. Don’t take it personally. There are no guarantees in life that we will get everything we want. In fact, we won’t, and that is just the way life is. Because that is the case, don’t take it personally when someone turns you down. Hearing “no” does not mean that someone is rejecting you as a person; it does not mean they dislike you and it does not mean that they feel some negative way about you. It simply means that they said “no” to your request. It’s not necessarily personal and they may turn you down for the same reasons that you might turn down someone else’s request.
2. Someone saying “yes” to your request is not an indication that they approve of you as a person, they are simply approving your request. Someone saying “no” to you is not indicative of their disapproval of you.
3. Because a request is denied right now does not mean it will continue to be denied forever. If it’s important to you that a particular person honors your request, you may want to be somewhat persistent in following up with additional requests, but just don’t do that in situations where “persistence” might be interpreted as “annoying.” If it’s not important that a particular person approves your request, seek out someone who might approve it.