**三一工学院“普译奖”全国大学生翻译比赛选拔赛-英译汉**

Rejection Makes Your Life Better

As an extension of our positivity/consumer culture, many of us have been“indoctrinated” with the belief that we should try to be as inherently accepting and affirmative as possible. This is a cornerstone of many of the so-called positive thinking books: open yourself up to opportunities, be accepting, say yes to everything and everyone, and so on.

But we need to reject something. Otherwise, we stand for nothing. If nothing is better or more desirable than anything else, then we are empty and our life is meaningless. We are without values and therefore live our life without any purpose.

The avoidance of rejection (both giving and receiving it) is often sold to us as a way to make ourselves feel better. But avoiding rejection gives us short-term pleasure by making us rudderless and directionless in the long term.

To truly appreciate something, you must confine yourself to it. There's a certain level of joy and meaning that you reach in life only when you've spent decades investing in a single relationship, a single craft, a single career. And you cannot achieve those decades of investment without rejecting the alternatives.

The act of choosing a value for yourself requires rejecting alternative values. If I choose to make my marriage the most important part of my life, that means I'm (probably) choosing not to make cocaine-fueled hooker orgies an important part of my life. If I'm choosing to judge myself based on my ability to have open and accepting friendships, that means I'm rejecting trashing my friends behind their backs. These are all healthy decisions, yet they require rejection at every turn.

The point is this: we all must give a fuck about something, in order to value something. And to value something, we must reject what is not that something. To value X, we must reject non-X.

That rejection is an inherent and necessary part of maintaining our values, and therefore our identity. We are defined by what we choose to reject. And if we reject nothing (perhaps in fear of being rejected by something ourselves), we essentially have no identity at all.

The desire to avoid rejection at all costs, to avoid confrontation and conflict, the desire to attempt to accept everything equally and to make everything cohere and harmonize, is a deep and subtle form of entitlement. Entitled people, because they feel as though they deserve to feel great all the time, avoid rejecting anything because doing so might make them or someone else feel bad. And because they refuse to reject anything, they live a valueless, pleasure-driven, and self-absorbed life. All they give a fuck about is sustaining the high a little bit longer, to avoid the inevitable failures of their life, to pretend the suffering away.

Rejection is an important and crucial life skill.