

Andrew: This session is about how to become rejection proof. It is led by Jia Jiang. He is the author of the book, Rejection Proof. Let's bring it up on the screen here, "How I Beat Fear and Became Invincible through 100 Days of Rejection." You can read all about Jia's rejection experiments on his blog, which I'm looking out right here. It's fearbuster.com, and what we'll cover here today, here are the big ideas we are going to be covering, it's all a small part of what's in his course. Let's bring it up on my screen so you can see it, where you can find it at rejectiongym.com, if you want to learn more about this. But we're going to be covering a whole lot here today with you, Jia. Thanks for coming here.

Jia: Hey. Thank you for having me, Andrew.

Andrew: Jia, you're a Mixergy fan who quit his job, you started your company, your wife was pregnant at the time, you introduced it to an investor, in fact, I think, this is the site right here. Let's bring it back up. Where is it? This is the business.

Jia: Yes.

Andrew: When you showed it to an investor, what happened?

Jia: Well, the idea was, like, a lot of people liked it. And depends on the customers and . . . but the thing is, the investor said he was interested and just listened to my pitch. It was almost a little bit like a shark tank. But I didn't get instantaneous result. He was like, "I will get back to you. Let me think about it." Then the thing is, by that time, if I didn't hear anything, it's probably a good sign that he wasn't going to invest.

But the thing is, at that time, I was a first time entrepreneur. I wanted this investment so bad. I felt it was an answer to my prayers or everything, but I just thought, and because he said he liked it and everything, I thought he was going to give the investment, but he didn't. He sent me an email later on telling about he wasn't going to move forward with this. It's a very short email and that's where the rejection that led to everything that happened later on.

Andrew: Yeah. In your book, which I freaking love because it's just a narrative, it's a story of a guy who gets rejected and holds himself back for a large part of his life without even realizing that he's setting all kinds of limits to himself. And then you tell the story of how you break free of that through these crazy experiments. Some of which we'll see here today. The thing is, though, in the book you talk about how you really expected this money. You did a great job. I think you were high-fiving after you did the pitch to this investor.

The investor said no. You were so surprised that you said to yourself, "I finally took a shot here. I finally overcame my fear and started a company and I still failed." And that threw you for a loop and kept you from trying again. And that's the problem that we're trying to really overcome here. That rejection in the past often is the limiting influence on us that keeps us from taking more risks, from taking more shots at the world and we don't even realize that that's what it is, right?

Jia: Absolutely. Absolutely. We will have these moments in our lives that we fail in the past and we got rejected in the past. And sometimes it could be really public rejections or be about a girl or whatever. When those things happen, popular culture or popular psychology teaches us to get over it, don't worry about it, just go, don't take it personally, move on. But when we do that, we try to move over but those memories linger in our mind. If we don't actually know what rejections are and they can haunt us as we are moving forward into our bigger opportunities. So I found in my life was because sometimes in the back of . . . When I was little, I got rejected in classrooms or when I was a teenager, I was rejected with a business idea.

These moments linger in my mind and tell me I shouldn't do this, I shouldn't speak up, I shouldn't be more innovative because if I do people will reject me. And this is the moment that where I felt, "Wow, a simple rejection from an investor could make me want to quit my dream, my dream, my dream of being entrepreneur." And that's where I realized I have to overcome this fear before I move on.

Andrew: And the cool thing about what we're going to talk about here today is it's not just about overcoming the resistance and the fear of rejection, it's about how to turn rejections into wins, get people who say no to you to end up saying yes. And we're going to see a few examples of that, but let me show what can happen if people do some of what you've said or what you're about to teach. This is one of the videos from your experiment. There's a police car over your shoulder. Do you remember this one? Do you know what you did in this one? This was from a while back.

Jia: Yes, I do. I do remember exactly.

Andrew: If you describe it, I'll just skip around here. If you just tell us what it is that you were trying to do here as you're holding up this camera.

Jia: Well, so I approached a police officer that was outside a police station. I asked the officer, "Hey, can I get in your car? Can I just pretend to drive it?" And, by the way, I thought there's no way and hopefully he didn't arrest me on site. But he was like, "Okay. You look kind of harmless. Why not?" And so he did, he invited me into his car. And there was the other couple of police officers walking by, asking him what's going on and

he was like, "No. No problem." His colleagues were asking him. He's like, "Don't worry. I think I got this covered. It shouldn't be a problem." So he let me into his car and took pictures of me in the car. He took . . .

Andrew: This is you getting into the car and that's the photo that he then took of you in his police car.

Jia: Yeah. Yeah. Absolutely. And we see a lot of things on TV right now or a lot of backlash against police. You know, sometimes, but in my case I found they are just humans like you and me. Of course, we're all predisposed by our jobs. They're high anxiety, high pressure jobs and there are things that can go wrong in many cases. But really, in vast majority of the cases that, at least, in my personal experience, they are just humans like you and me. And if you treat them with respect and, of course, I have some advantage because by the time I made that request I learned how to talk to people by doing these rejection attempts again and again. So I kind of disarm people with the way I talk and . . .

Andrew: And it's a process. And it's a learnable, teachable process. You're going to teach us what you're saying here and how we can get the kinds of results. If you can get a police officer to just randomly let you in you in a car and do some of these other stuff, then we can make more proposals, get more people to say yes to the crazy things that we have in mind. And frankly, it's the crazy things that often help us really build our businesses. Really quickly, what are some of these other things that you got? On the top right, we see a photo of you in that police car. What are we looking at on the left?

Jia: On top left, I knock on a stranger's door and I had a soccer ball in my hand. It was all cleats and all decked out and I asked the person, "Can I play in your backyard?" And he said, "Sure. Come on in." And I couldn't believe it.

Andrew: He let you do it and he took a photo of you. And the lower part of the screen, what's on there?

Jia: This is where I got on the front of the plane. I approached the flight attendants before the plane took off saying, "Hey, can I give the safety announcement instead of you?" Most times, people when they give safety announcement, no one pay attention, right? You just watch your phone and try to make small talk with the people next to you. I said, "I'll try to make it entertaining. I will do it." And he said he couldn't let me do the safety announcement because, by law, I have to be sitting in those seats. But he would ask me to come to front and say whatever what I want to the customer, greet the customers.

Andrew: Did you get to say whatever you wanted to the crowded plane of people?

Jia: I couldn't believe it. Yeah. Absolutely. And I was like this, well, you know . . .

Andrew: This is all on camera. It's not 100 days of wins like this, but it's 100 days of you learning to deal with rejection to overcome your resistance to it and frankly, to get other people to overcome their rejections of you at times.

I wanted to go to the big board here and talk about how our audience can do it. I'm actually going to skip the first one and come back to in a moment. Instead, I'd like us to talk about what's number two on our list, which is "Turn Rejection into A Numbers Game." And one way that you did that is, let's go and go back into your site. Do I have that here? Yeah. Let me bring it up like this. Here is, I think, rejection number 50. This is you in Austin. There you are. I like the intro to your videos.

Jia: I should take that out.

Andrew: That's okay. We all have to collect emails addresses and grow our businesses. What are you doing here?

Jia: So this is where I went to . . . one of my rejection attempts was trying to find a job in one day. Just not about applying online, not by networking, just dropping in to random offices and tech companies, basically. And I asked them, "Hey, can I work for you for one day?" And so what happened is I made three stops. The first two stops, I got kind of swept out basically, scolded at and saying, "You shouldn't do this," but I left my resume.

But on the third try, the lady you were saying that beat you in the beginning, she was interested. And she's like, "Why would the well-dressed man ask for a job for just one day?" So I had this conversation and in the end, I convinced her to give me a job for one day to work for her as an assistant office manager for one day. She didn't know who I was. She didn't know what was going on. She just found this interesting and eventually she said yes. She would have to get the approval from her boss and once when that happened, this is the video of me working for this company for one day.

Andrew: It's called Big Commerce. They're a major e-commerce platform. That's you working for the day.

Jia: Yeah.

Andrew: The point is, you walked right in there and you say, "I want a job." And what you're saying to us here is if we want rejections to turn into yeses, we shouldn't look for

one person. We shouldn't have what one of my past interviewees, Neil Strauss, used to call one "one-itis," where it was just, "I have to have this one and if I can't, then everything stinks." Set up a series of them, so that you're almost pushing or forcing yourself to do this over and over again until you get that yes. Make it a numbers game.

Jia: Yeah. What I learned is there's no universally rejected idea or no universally accepted idea. If you really want to get a yes, sometimes you just have to talk to enough people. So now when I approach things, instead of saying, "How can I get that yes?" I say, "How many nos can I take before I quit?" In this case, I said I will take three nos. I will visit three offices in one afternoon. And lo and behold, on the third try, that person said yes.

Andrew: All right. Let's go to the big board. I'm going to keep skipping around here, actually, frankly because I'm going to be entertained by you today. And I also I think that it will pull people in better.

Jia: Sure.

Andrew: All right. So the next one I'd like to talk about is "Don't Run When You Hear No. Ask Why." And you have an example of how you did that where . . . let me bring up again another one of these videos. This is why it took me a little bit longer to set up with before we started.

Jia: You really did your homework, Andrew.

Andrew: This is a guy, and I could see you're shooting your videos. I love these intros. Let's skip over to you're walking over with . . . What's that in your hand?

Jia: This is a rose bush I bought from a local store.

Andrew: Okay. Just a plain old rose bush . . .

Jia: Yep.

Andrew: Hasn't even fully started to grow.

Jia: Yep.

Andrew: Who is this woman?

Jia: So okay. There's the backstory to this. I actually should've put a whole story, but

what I did is I just went straight to talking to this lady. What happened is before talking to this lady, I was talking to her neighbor. Her neighbor was an older gentleman. I knocked on his door, I have that flower in my hand, saying, "Hey, can I plant this flower in your backyard." I don't know why I like people's backyard that much. It's like [inaudible 00:13.03] but the person said no and before he could turn away, I asked him why. And he said, "I like flowers, but the thing is I have a dog that would dig up everything I put in my backyard. So what you want to do is you might want to talk to . . . I think her name is Lauren. Lauren across the street is my neighbor and she loves flowers."

So this lady you're seeing in the video is Lauren. When I approached them, they were about to leave. She was getting into their car I said, "Can I plant this flower in your backyard?" And she said, "Oh, that's interesting. Yeah." So she talked to her husband, and eventually, they let me plant the flower in their yard and they're very happy about it. So this told me that had I just left after getting the no from the first gentleman, I would've though, "Okay. Of course, he was going to say no. This is a strange request. Maybe I didn't look that trustworthy" or whatever. "Maybe he didn't like my . . ." I don't know.

I could start making up stories that are just totally not true, but this turned out to be not me. Because I asked why, I found out it's not because me. It's because what I offered did not fit him and did not fit his needs. And he trusted me enough to even give me a referral, using sales terms, and asked me to go across the street.

So ask them why after. This is not the end-all, be-all, if ask why you will always find the reason. Sometimes people just want to avoid confrontation, they will make up reasons, but a lot of times some people would actually give you a real reason why they would give you rejections. So sometimes if you attack the why, meaning if you solved that why you can actually turn a no into a yes.

Andrew: That's one of my favorite stories of yours. You really did, just by asking that one question, understand why it really didn't make sense for him and then get him to help you to turn that no into a yes somewhere else. All right. On to the big board now, let's go to the first point, which is "Understand What Rejection Is." And you didn't. You had this idea for skates or what was it?

Jia: Yeah. So if you've heard of these things called Heelys, basically it's a shoe . . .

Andrew: Yeah. It's like this.

Jia: Yup. There you go. It's a shoe with . . . Well, you see it; it's with a wheel.

Andrew: With a wheel on the bottom of it. I see kids running around with it all the time. It's not so much running around. They put two feet together and they start sliding around.

Jia: Yeah. So back in 1997, I had this idea, the exact same idea. I mean, it's a little bit different, but it is almost exactly the same idea. And I was ready. I wanted to be an inventor. I was ready to apply for a patent for this idea. And then at the time I was a 16-year-old kid. I didn't know a lot about America or patent or anything, so I relied on my family for advice.

So I talked to my uncle, who I admired the heck out of him, he means the world to me even today. But when I asked him, "I have this idea, look, I got this imprint." I made a drawing and I went to a school library to find out what a blueprint should look like.

I used that blueprint to make my own blueprint of this shoe, so I send it to him and yet he told me, "That's not a good idea. Why would you spend time on this? Instead, you should spend some time on improving your English." That's a great advice, I guess. English is always good after moving to this country from China.

I was so dejected because I respect my uncle so much and he means so much to me. A rejection from him, to me, it was like the truth. That means I shouldn't do this. But then just a couple of years later, maybe just one year, this Heely thing caught on. I think his name is Adam. I forgot his name, but he applied for the patent and he made Heely almost a billion-dollar company at its height.

So every day, a lot of times I see kids skating around in the malls and just on the street and I think about what could have been. But the thing is it has taught me one thing. We all have this type of experience where we have what we thought was a great idea or a proposal even at work. As soon as we hear someone we respect or we trust say no to us, we just want to give up. Because "no" is the most painful word in the English vocabulary and we just don't want it. We just want to move away from it. So when we get rejected, a lot of times we just give up.

So what I learned later on is no matter how much I respect my uncle, no matter how smart he is, what he's saying is not the universal truth. It's far from it. In fact, if I asked 10 different people, I might get 10 different answers from that. So rejection is really nothing more than people's opinion. Opinion is based on his background, his education, maybe the mood or her-I'm using the word he-but maybe it's her mood of the day. Maybe it's her upbringing, her prejudices. There are a lot of things that would lead up to

a rejection, so if we treat rejection as some sort of a universal indictment of our idea or who we are then that's where you get in trouble. But rejection is nothing more than people's opinion.

Andrew: Good point. And it's hard to sometimes accept that, especially when there's someone who we admire. When you talked about your uncle, I think, "Well, who cares about your uncle? I don't know him. He's not the person that's significant in my life." But when I think about it on my own life who would say no to me that would suddenly make me rethink everything, and there are a couple of people, frankly.

Jia: Yup.

Andrew: Right?

Jia: Absolutely. Absolutely.

Andrew: All right. Back to the big board. The next one we should talk about is "Negotiate for Something Less." Negotiate. Let's bring up your site again.

Jia: I like how you're doing this, Andrew.

Andrew: This is one of the other people who you talked to. You're standing outside of the Westin Hotel.

Jia: Yep.

Andrew: Right.

Jia: I've researched, and supposedly this is the best hotel in Austin.

Andrew: Okay.

Jia: I think Austin can do better, frankly, but anyway.

Andrew: So you're walking over, what were you asking her here? She's smiling. She seems okay with it. What are you asking?

Jia: I asked her for a free night.

Andrew: A free night at the hotel?

Jia: Yep.

Andrew: Okay.

Jia: But she's really good at customer service. She's smiling. She's friendly and so I asked her, "Can I sleep there for free?" And she said, "No. I can't do that." Then I asked her could I have a trip up to your hotel room because I heard they have this thing called "heavenly bed." Supposedly this is really good, that it is good for your spine and I want to try it. So I said, "Can I go there? I'm just going to take nap." And she let me do it. So this is the principle . . .

Andrew: Wait. I don't want to overlook what you just said there. You said, "Can I go there, not to see it. Can I go there and take a nap?"

Jia: Yeah. Can I try it? Can I try . . .

Andrew: Can I try it?

Jia: Can I try your bed?

Andrew: Okay.

Jia: Like, not her bed but her hotel's bed.

Andrew: Her hotel's bed, right?

Jia: That would be a different request.

Andrew: Okay. So you go in and she's letting you up here.

Jia: Yeah.

Andrew: We can actually . . .

Jia: She sent this person to accompany me up to the hotel, and there is the heavenly bed. And I just fall down.

Andrew: And you get to lie there and you took a real nap in there?

Jia: Quick one, because that person is waiting for me, so I was there. Look, I was happy with some visuals about the best things I could dream of, including Costco. I love

Costco.

Andrew: I see. Yes.

Jia: So Krispy Kreme, that's what happened. So I took a quick test drive of the hotel room and came back. So this taught that sometimes if I come in and asked her, "Hey, can I go to your hotel room and just have a free ride on the bed and try what happens," I'm not sure if she will say yes. I mean, I don't have the evidence to say she would say no. But it's pretty far-fetched. But I asked to have a free night there and after she said no, I retreated to a lesser ground, saying, "Can I just do this?" It's really hard to say no to a person twice on two different attempts. In fact, what I was doing was I was negotiating. I was willing to step back, and people usually, when they see you are stepping back, they usually return in kind. So this is what I demonstrated.

By the way, this is not my idea. I didn't invent this idea. This is based on an idea from the book, called Influence, where they've done research on this. So I actually just experimented on this idea. It turned out to be, again, and again in my 100 days of rejection, I used this idea to get something lesser of what I originally requested. But sometimes even it amazes me.

Andrew: I see. And that's part of the fun of also asking you something so outrageous that if they say yes, then you've got an outrageous experience. You're like sitting in a police car and some of the other things.

Jia: Yep.

Andrew: Weren't you in a helicopter also?

Jia: Yeah. And I was actually not in a helicopter. I was in a gyroplane, and this is toward the end of my 100 Days. I went to an airfield in Austin, in Pflugerville. It's a small town near Austin. And I said, "What are some of the things that no way people will say yes? Just no way." How about I fly a plane? I don't know how to fly a plane. I have no license or, frankly, I don't have the courage to fly a plane even right now. But I went, I saw this pilot-looking guy and I asked him, "Hey, can I fly your plane?" And not only did he say yes, he was actually really happy I asked.

It turned out he owned this thing called a gyroplane. It's a small plane, almost like a miniature version of a helicopter or like a bigger version of a motorcycle in the air. And he seen an enthusiast and he loved to show this to people. So when he saw me come, he's like, "Sure, I'll take you up there." It was pretty amazing because when I tell people, "Flying is not like . . ." When I think about flying, I don't think about flying like that. I

thought about going to the big commercial airplane and really there are a lot of bad experiences that come with it. But that flight, you can see in this video, was a . . . here you go.

Andrew: There it is.

Jia: Yeah. So that's my buddy and I took him there. Actually, this is a crew of people who are doing a documentary. They felt what I was doing is cool, so they came down from LA to Austin to do this. And so they said, "We want rejections." So I said, "Let's go to ask to fly a plane and there's no way they would get a yes." But we did. We did get a yes. So he flew first then I did it and it was pretty amazing.

Andrew: And even if then you don't get that amazing experience, you can always ask for a second thing that's a little bit easier, more palatable and you're saying people are more likely to say yes to that.

Jia: Yeah.

Andrew: Because they don't like to say no twice.

Jia: No. No. We often think people are cold. They would just flat-out reject our request and so we often don't ask. And sometimes when we ask, we don't hear the no. We either just retreat and run away or we could get angry sometimes. We're like, "How could they say no to us?"

Well, sometimes we're tied to getting a yes. But what I'm telling people is to have a second ask ready. Like for example, if he will say no to me in this case, we would say, "Can I get in the plane and you can take a picture of me? Or maybe we all get on the plane? Maybe, you can just set up a lesson for me I can do that? If I have something lesser to ask, the person is more likely to say yes to the second request.

Andrew: All right. Good point. Let's go back to the big board. And the next thing we should talk about is to use rejection as a motivating tool."

Jia: Yeah.

Andrew: Let me bring this guy up here. Do you recognize his photo and where he is?

Jia: This is Michael Jordan.

Andrew: He's at the Basketball Hall of Fame ceremony.

Jia: Yep. He made the ceremony speech that's unlike anyone else doing it. I mean, when we think about acceptance of an award, we talk about, "Hey, thank you, my wife; thank you, my director; thank you for my coach and thank all of these people helping me. You've inspired me." We would maybe go into some personal stories, someone telling us an inspiring story that made us who we are.

No. This guy, he was the best basketball player in history. And he got on there, and all he talked about was rejection. He got rejected in high school and he was not a starter on his varsity team. And when he went to University of North Carolina, Coach Dean Smith wouldn't make him a starter, wouldn't talk about him in a media interview. When he got to the NBA, he was shunned by fellow NBA stars Magic Johnson and Larry Bird because they were more established stars and they thought this youngster hasn't made it yet. And he talked about how a GM was saying players are not the reason for success, actually, managements are. He started having this laundry list of all the rejections he received in his career.

And then he talked about how each one of them was like wood added to this fire, to make him this excellent player. Because every day he needs to find that fuel, and rejection was that fuel. And this is amazing. No one has achieved the height of excellence that he has, and he did that not by using inspiration, but using rejection as motivation. He constantly try to prove other people wrong and he's often said in the arena you would hear thousands of people cheering and clapping, but he's looking for that one person who boos him. And he will use that as motivation to perform to a level that no one could.

Andrew: Did you do that? Did you use one person's reject . . . What did you use as rejection motivation?

Jia: Yeah. So it was the investor's rejection, and I would be lying to say that rejection did not pull some . . . it did not kill me and when I came back I'm saying, "I'm going to just blow this up. I'm going to. . ."

Andrew: And when you said it to yourself, did you say, "I'm going to show him," or, "I'm going to make it"? What was going on in your head?

Jia: Yeah. I'm going to show the world.

Andrew: "I'm going to show the world," not him. "I'm going to show the world that his assessment of me is wrong."

Jia: I'm going to show the world that I can turn rejection into something great. Because, frankly, people like him or investors like him reject people on a daily basis. Most people would just go away or maybe get angry or sulk or maybe find on the next investor. I'm like, "I'm going to turn this rejection thing into my own tool to make me a better leader, to make me a better entrepreneur." And later on when this thing blew up I'm like, "You know what, this is my life now. I'm going to turn this into my life mission." So small part of that was basically the motivation of this rejection.

Andrew: All right. And let's go back to the big board. Let's talk about "Giving A Reason when Asking for Something." Let me show it here, go back to your site. This is you walking around New York City. What are you trying to get people to do here?

Jia: I'm getting people to take pictures with me randomly. They couldn't believe it. I mean, they were almost always they're like, "What are you trying to do? What? Are you trying to have me take a picture of you? No problem." But I would tell them, "I'm trying to take a picture with you," they're all perplexed but they all said yes. And part of the reason is I told almost all of them that because I feel this is New York and people don't do this. People just want to get other people off their picture frame and instead they want to take pictures of those buildings and landmarks. But, you know what, I just want to take pictures with people. And they all said yes, which was really surprising. Not one person said no.

Andrew: By the way, let's have a look at this one for a second because there's something that just stands out for me. This is him. You're talking to him, right? You're explaining to him, you're saying what you just told me that . . . here we go. Saying, "My reason for doing is everyone in New York wants to take pictures of buildings. I want to take pictures of people in New York." I get that and that's the reason that he says yes, that's our point here, but the thing that stands out to me is you're still wearing your earphones the whole time. What are you listening to?

Jia: Yep. This is where I'm filming with that iPhone on my neck. You see that little pouch that . . .

Andrew: And so why are you listening to them too?

Jia: No. I used that as a microphone, so I can talk.

Andrew: So the earphones that are in your ears are actually aren't important. It's the microphone that's dangling from them that's important.

Jia: Yes.

Andrew: That's how you're recording your audio.

Jia: Yes.

Andrew: And by wearing it around your neck, you can shoot video of the people you're talking to.

Jia: Yeah.

Andrew: I see. And that way it just looks like you're walking over them and they don't see that they're being even videoed necessarily.

Jia: No. Maybe once or twice some people said, "Are you recording?" I would tell them, "Yes. It's my blog." So I never lie about recording.

Andrew: Okay. So the big point here, the reason that so many people say yes is because you give them a reason for doing it. So it's not, "Hey, can I take a picture of you," which seems a little bit creepy, but, "Can I take a picture of you? Most people who come to New York would take pictures of buildings. I want to take pictures of locals. Will you do it?"

Jia: Yeah.

Andrew: And that's what gets it to it. All right.

Jia: Yeah. You heard this landmark study called Xerox Machine, right? This is back in the 70s when Harvard professors did this. Basically, it turned out that if you give people reason to ask to cut in line of people who are getting ready to make copies at a Xerox machine, but if you would give them a reason, and sometimes it could be a really bad reason to, but the fact that you're giving them a reason, the chance of people letting you to cut in front of them goes way up.

Andrew: Okay. Yeah. I think that was an experiment where they said, "Can I please cut in front of you because I'm in a rush," or something like that?

Jia: Yeah.

Andrew: People would say yes, but if they just said, "Can I please get in front of you because I need to get in front of you," or something nonsensical like that, people still were more likely to say yes than if they were asked without a reason. So just a reason,

even if it's a flimsy one, is enough to get people to agree.

Jia: Yeah.

Andrew: All right.

Jia: I don't make up reasons. I don't lie about, "Hey, can I take a picture of you because it's my mother's dying wish." That would just defeat the purpose. That would be too easy and that would make me feel like a secondhand car salesman. I always give a real reason, and in that case, that was a real reason why I was doing it.

Andrew: So you were going in to experiment with rejection and putting yourself out there in situations where people would reject you. But it sounds like you are also doing a lot of persuasion research too, trying to . . .

Jia: Yeah.

Andrew: You were? How methodical were you about that? Did you go home and say, "How do I get someone to say yes?" or, "What's the way to get them to be more likely to say yes?"

Jia: Yeah. So it's a combination of kind of just a spur of the moment thinking but also some planning as well. Because I've read a lot of business books, and I listen to a lot of podcasts and interviews about how other people do things. I just want to experiment with them in my own case. So these experiments started with me looking for no. There's nothing. Just give me a no and let me move on.

But then I had these moments where people started saying yes to me. That's where the light bulb kind of turned on because I felt, "Wow, maybe I shouldn't expect a yes or shouldn't expect no. Well, I should just ask and learn and experiment and turn these 100 days of rejection into a learning, experimenting or proof playground for me." So that's you started seeing these lessons coming out just because I became very intentional toward the middle and end of these whole experiments.

Andrew: All right. On to the big board, next big one is to collaborate. Don't be contentious. Don't argue. You actually had an experience. I don't know which one of the videos on your site it is, and hopefully we can see it here. But you walked in into a music studio with someone else.

Jia: Yeah.

Andrew: What happened there?

Jia: This is not actually in the 100 days video, but because it was the same documentary crew you saw earlier. They made into their own video. They basically went to Austin. They are saying it's the capital of live music, right? So there are a lot of independent music studios where they would let you rent and play music and perform. So we went to this studio and the idea is we want to hear the receptionist play his favorite instrument.

Andrew: The receptionist? The person who's sitting at the door?

Jia: Yes. The person sitting at the door.

Andrew: Even the receptionist to play an instrument for you?

Jia: Yeah. Yeah. We don't know if he could play or not. So the first person, it was actually documentary crewmember. He wants to try this. He just came in and said, "I want you to play this." And they were like, "Sorry. I can't do this because I'm doing my job. I can't leave here." And then my friend, or the documentary crewmember, started arguing with him saying, "No. It is part of the job. I'm a customer. I could be a customer. That is your job to actually . . ." You know, this started to become contentious. Their voices were raised and I'm like, "Wow, I have to stop this because it's not fun. This is not how you do things."

So I stopped him and I said, "Hey, what we really want is just to hear you play music. Is there any way you can help us to make this happen?" So I turned that "if" question into, "How can you make this happen," into a "how" question. And he's the customer service person, right? Now, he started taking off his hat of argument and put on this hat of customer service and he was like, "Okay. Let's do this. I'm going to ask my coworkers to be here, to man the booth and we'll have a free drum room. I'm going to play my favorite drum for you." And then the documentary crewmembers, their jaws just dropped.

They were like, "How is that possible? How is that we cannot get this done and you can just do it? What are you doing?" At that moment, that's also a moment where I'm like, "Wow, I'm actually getting really good at this, that the people who haven't practiced this don't know how to talk to strangers asking for favors," and I could. And because I was respectful, because I collaborated with the other person, I was trying to fulfill a wish and try to do as a favor instead of forcing them, telling them this is their duty and force them to argue. Because, as you know, after you start to argue and disagree on things, the chance of you getting a yes goes a way down.

Andrew: Yeah. Because now you're reinforcing the other person that they believe the

no. And the more you argue, the more they have to stand their ground. So you're saying turn it into a collaborative experience by saying, "What we're trying to do is . . . how do we make that happen?"

Jia: Yup. Absolutely. Instead . . .

Andrew: Okay. You're trying to do is just hear what the studio sounds like, is there a way for us to try that?

Jia: Yeah. I have a few other examples from the 100 days. The solutions they can come up with are much better than we originally thought. I mean, we sometimes we have this god complex or maybe just we'll have this thought that this is the way I want it done and it should be done. But we're not the experts in many things.

Andrew: Yeah.

Jia: A lot of times, the other people can come up with solutions that are so much better. Honestly, I'm not sure but some of you are but if you are a US congressman who's listening to this, get the rejection therapy because you guys need to know how to collaborate.

Andrew: All right. Final point on our big board is to acknowledge doubt before the other person raises it. And here's how you did that. Let's again go back to your site. This is fearbuster.com, and there it is.

Jia: There you go.

Andrew: This is you at Starbucks. What's happening here?

Jia: Yeah. So this person, he was manning the Starbucks store and asked him, "Hey, can I be a Starbucks greeter?" "What's a Starbucks greeter?" It's like I want to be a Walmart greeter who works at a Starbucks. Basically, you're standing there at door and greeting customers and tell them we got a really good and it was holiday. It was the holiday season I wanted to give them holiday cheers.

The thing is, when I asked he was not sure, right? And one thing I said is, "Is that weird?" He said, "Yes. This is really weird." And by me asking that, telling them it's weird, I can almost feel that he was putting on the doubt look.

Look, he's right here. His face is full of doubt. He was not sure. But because I acknowledged that what I'm asking is weird, he felt much better about it afterwards. And

in many cases, when we're trying to make a sale or trying to ask people for things or an entrepreneur request, we try to hide our weakness, right? We just try to sound as if everything was great.

But I found if sometimes if I make the other person know the weakness in my argument, like, "I'm asking for favor. You probably haven't heard this a lot," or, "Maybe this is a little bit weird," you actually put them at ease because now they know you're not crazy. Then now, they now know you are not trying to get them fired. You're showing empathy that you're thinking the same way they do. And don't think those doubts will just go away on their own, just naturally on their own. When you mention them, the chance of you getting a yes goes up.

Andrew: This is you actually greeting people, right?

Jia: Yeah.

Andrew: And this is . . .

Jia: I'm greeting people, yeah.

Andrew: It's weird because we don't see you in your videos sometimes. It's you showing us, from your perspective, what it looks like as you're greeting people as they walk in the door.

Jia: Yep. By the way, whatever you do, being a greeter is not a good trajectory for your career.

Andrew: I know.

Jia: It's boring as hell.

Andrew: But that's a really good point, to acknowledge the weirdness. To say, "Hey, is that weird?" Even with guests, if I bring up, "Hey, this is a little bit of a tough question. Isn't it?" or, "Is that a weird thing for me to bring up?" it does reduce the barrier. Or, "I don't think I asked that clearly," and what I want to do is pretend that I asked it perfectly. But if I say, "I don't think I asked that clearly," it brings them onboard with me and gets them to help me out too.

Jia: Absolutely. Because we are showing a weakness or you show that you're a human. You show that you're not standing up there making this request from top down. You

were just like collaborating and then that's where almost automatically I want to defend you, Andrew, when you asked that question. I'm like, "You're fine. You're fine." That's actually a very powerful tool when you are making a request.

Andrew: Acknowledge the doubt that they're feeling instead of pretending it doesn't exist and they realize that they are human being and it makes them more likely to say yes. All right. These are a few ideas and let's go back to the big word, yeah, we've gone through all of them. If people want to see more of your work, they should come to fearbuster.com. Almost everything I pulled up here was from these videos. I love when someone teaches not based on what they read in a book or what they theorized works best, but because of their experiences.

And here you've got a collection of 100 of your experiences on your site, on Fear Buster. So I urge people to click the 100 Days of Rejection link at the top of the page. I urge them to get the book because it's really well done. Where is that? There it is. The book is just so well told. It's a collection of stories. Here what I asked you to do was I said, "Please pull out specific tips that people can use, so if there's one thing that they got from this, they will have gotten the value out of listening to this and go on use it tomorrow, if they wanted to, or today." What you did in the book was say, "I don't need to give you a bunch of instructions. I'm just going to tell you my story."

And as I told you before, one of the things I love about you is the way you tell stories. I get wrapped up in the story but you also have these open loops where you say, "And then something happened. But I'll tell you about it in a moment because this other thing is also important." Then I say, "All right. I'm sucked into the story. But what happened to the thing that you didn't tell us?" "Well, that comes later on." Yeah, anyway, I don't think I'm doing it justice but it's kind of like watching an episode of Lost, where we just keep seeing, "This is coming soon. Wait." And unlike Lost, you actually deliver on it.

Jia: Wow. I mean . . .

Andrew: Anyway, I really love the book.

Jia: That's crazy Andrew, wow. If my book can be as good as Lost then I'm set for life.

Andrew: More substantive and you actually deliver on your promises. I hate that TV show. I got sucked in to it every single episode. They're so good at sucking me in but they're not good at payoff. You're good at sucking me into your stories and there's always a payoff. So people should click the 100 Days of Rejection. Get the book here and if they want more of the kinds of tips that we talked about today, there's a link right there at the top of your site for the rejection course. That is available at

rejectiongym.com, if they want to skip to it directly, or from your site, which is fearbuster.com. So good to have you on here.

Jia: Can I make one more point?

Andrew: Yeah. I'd love it.

Jia: If you read my book or if you do Rejection Gym, one thing I want to say is you're going to make some change in your lives. You got to have some tools that you didn't have before, where you can increase your persuasion skills. The thing I want to say is don't use that for bad. Because these things are kind of amoral things, like you can manipulate people. I don't want that to happen. I had the idea as, "I want to be a better entrepreneur. I want to change the world in different ways. I want to make the world a better place."

The last thing I would want is for you to learn these techniques and things that use it for something that's not ethical.

Andrew: It's funny you just said that because in my mind I was thinking, "If I go on 100 days of getting people to do stuff for me for free and see what happens. I can take plane rides. I can get free coffee. I can donuts made in special shapes." I see. That's what you're saying. Look, don't get carried away with the power of this. It's not about doing this for evil and getting small things like a free cup of coffee or plane rides. So actually it's not called . . . What was it called? The gyro what?

Jia: Gyroplane.

Andrew: Gyroplane. So it's not about that, it's about the bigger idea, which is how do you not get afraid of rejection when it comes to doing big things like creating these big companies that we're all here to do. And if we do get rejected, how do we turn it around? Turn a no into a yes.

Jia: Yep.

Andrew: All right.

Jia: This is a means to a greater end. The person who defines the end can only be you. But this will help.

Andrew: All right. Thank you so much for doing this. Thank you all for being a part of Mixergy. We work so hard to make sure that every person who comes on here to teach

teaches us something that's directly applicable to entrepreneurs, has the experience to really back up what they're teaching and can teach something that we can use right away, not just some time and then in the future, maybe, possibly, no. This is something that's immediately useful and I'm so proud to have you on here. I've known you for a while and I'm glad that you're now part of the Mixergy family. And thank you all.

Jia: [inaudible 00:46:53]

Andrew: Thank you. And for setting up the video the way you did. You're easy to see on camera. And thank you all for being a part of Mixergy. Bye, everyone.