

How Not to Cope With Personal Insult

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The Huffington Post:

Humans have always had to cope with threats, both big and small. The physical and life-threatening threats that our ancestors faced have largely been replaced by social threats, but they are nonetheless an emotional menace. Insults, rejections and criticism can undermine our integrity and self-esteem. Sometimes we cope with these threats smoothly, and other times awkwardly — sometimes disastrously.

Is there a single, most effective strategy for dealing with life's constant battering? One way to approach this question is to look at an example of sheer social ineptness, and where better to find this than in the old sitcom "Seinfeld," specifically in the character of George Costanza. Jerry's best friend is the embodiment of insecurity. He's constantly threatened by pretty much everyone, at least in his own mind, so he is always trying to deflect or defuse or escape one unsettling event or another. How does George cope with the insults he detects everywhere?

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