

# Ep #267: How to Deal with Haters

## Full Episode Transcript



With Your Host

**Simone Grace Seol**

I Am Your Korean Mom with Simone Grace Seol

## Ep #267: How to Deal with Haters

Hey, I'm Simone Seol, *I Am Your Korean Mom*, and this is my show, the Simone Show. Let's go.

Hey, let's talk about haters. It's something I coach on a lot, especially during times when there are contentious issues in the news. Especially in times when our lives and/or businesses and/or politics are evolving. And we are, so many of us, are growing in public, dealing with haters is a thing.

A lot of times, when we're scared to come out and be ourselves, and talk about our businesses, and do our business and do our activism, it's because we're afraid of haters. Now, if you know how to think about haters, and know how to respond to each different type of hater, I think that's going to give you a lot of peace of mind and wisdom that's going to fortify you in how you show up.

I think that's important because I really want you to know that not all haters are created equal. I want you to know exactly how to think about and respond to each different type of hater. Because mixing those up can create a lot of unnecessary suffering. So, I'm going to get to that in a minute.

But I'm pretty sure that by the end of this episode, all of this is going to embolden you and encourage you to be more of your incredible self out in the world. Because that can only be a good thing.

So, one more thing, even though I'm talking about haters, please know that I'm using this word, as a kind of catch-all shorthand for all different types of situations, people, and feedback, that might be unpleasant to interact with.

But I don't actually believe in the construct of "haters. I don't think it's all that useful. I don't think it's all that accurate. Because, for one, I think the vast majority of people are not actually motivated by hate.

Very few people have actual hate in their hearts, even though some people definitely do. And a lot of situations where we're talking about haters, it's not really about hate, right? I've seen legitimate feedback, that people

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should consider, get brushed off as, “Oh, those are just haters,” and that can be reductive. That limits our opportunities.

So, I chose to use this term for this podcast because it's a convenient word. When I say “haters,” we all know what I'm talking about, and we all use it in a common way. So, I'm using this term for convenience; it's going to save us time. But please know that there's a little bit of nuance. It's not a perfect term, but we're just going to use it for convenience today. So, keep that in mind as I talk.

Now, let's get right into it. The first thing I want to tell you about haters, is that having haters is a good thing. Wait, what? Yeah, you heard me. You *want* to have haters. The only way to ensure that you don't have haters, is if you're taking up zero space. No one knows you exist. You're a perfect wallflower. You're not using your voice. Or maybe you do use your voice, but you're not saying anything meaningful about anything.

I'm going to quote Elbert Hubbard, who said, there's only one way “To avoid criticism, do nothing, say nothing, be nothing.” Getting hate or having haters is receipt that you took up space, that you are someone, that you did and said something that was worth a damn.

Hear me again, because I want these words to be etched into your brain. Having haters is receipt for taking up space and using your voice. And how much hate you get, how many haters you have, has nothing to do with how worthy and important and good and useful and beautiful your work is.

A lot of people confuse getting hate with, “Oh, maybe I'm doing something bad.” They take it as a sign that they're doing something bad, they need to change what they're doing. A lot of times, it's actually opposite.

In fact, doing good in the world, introducing new possibilities into the world, doing something creative and innovative, has always challenged the status quo and therefore has always attracted hate.

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The very artists and writers that we praise as genius and innovative today, that can move the state of these artistic forms forward, like, Picasso, for example, received massive hate in their lifetimes for daring to do something differently than whatever was the standard at the time.

The greatest humanitarian heroes, that we all collectively agree are amazing and that we look up to, also challenged the status quo so much that lots and lots and lots of people fucking hated their guts.

Mahatma Gandhi, Mother Teresa, Nelson Mandela, Martin Luther King Jr., each and every one of these people were very controversial and vociferously hated by many, many people in their lifetimes. They have had books written about how horrible and hated they are. Literally, this is true. People have written tracts and books about how they really didn't like each of these people, and they were horrible, right?

Have you ever had a book written about how horrible you are? Me neither, but guess what? Each one of these, humanity's heroes, did. And many of their critics still haven't piped down even after they've passed away.

This is my favorite joke that I like to say, to illustrate a point here is, what do you call someone who is hated by half of the entire United States population? It's the American president. That's a lot of hate. But guess what? They still get to be "the leader" of the free world, right?

President Obama, hated by so many people. Trump, hated by so many people, including myself, but he still got to be president. Now, my favorite example of all is Jesus Christ. Regardless of what you think about institutional religion nowadays, I think we can pretty much all agree that in his lifetime, the actual historical figure, preached nothing but loving your neighbor.

He did miracles and healed the sick, and he was just helping the poor, right? That was what he was about in his lifetime. What did people do to him? They hated him so fucking much, that they invented criminal charges against him and executed him in public.

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So, why do you think that you shouldn't be getting any haters? I hope that tells you, being good, doing useful things, doing creative work, helping people in the world, for some really, really weird reason, all of this kind of comes with a bit of hate and criticism.

And in fact, the bigger your work, the bigger your voice, the bigger your impact, the more hate you can get. The more you challenge the status quo, the more your work challenges the status quo, the more hate you can get.

That's why I always celebrate my clients when they say they've gotten a hater for the first time. In my programs we're like, "Yay!" Everybody gathers around them and applaud, throw a party, right? I'm like, "Congratulations. Now, you're in the big league. Now, you're doing this for real; before it was some kind of hobby." So, I'm being humorous in some of this, but I'm also dead serious.

So, if this message resonates with you, I want you to know that this is for you too. If you are dealing with hate, and if you are struggling with it, know that that's receipt that you took up space. That you are someone, and that you said something and did something, that moved humanity in some direction, right? And if you don't have any haters, yet, it's time to step up your game. Okay?

Okay, now, that's the most important thing, don't be afraid of haters. And in fact, if you don't have any, you should be louder and you should take up more space and you should be more of yourself. And inevitably, someone's going to be a hater.

So, now let's talk about different types of haters. Because like I said before, there's a different required response for each one of them. And it's really important to know, which is which.

The first type of hater, and you can argue, "Well, that's not really a hater," but again, I'm using the word "hater" as a shorthand. And when people casually throw the word around, it encompasses lots of different things. And

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the first one of those things, one of the forms of haters, is people who just don't like you.

They don't like who you are. They think you should be different, and are committed to misunderstanding you and communicating that in a mean or malicious way. The people who just straight up are against you, just straight up don't like you at all, and have no intention of anything different. Okay, that's like the purest definition of a hater. They just don't fucking like you. So, that's one type.

The response to that is fairly simple, which is tell them to fuck off. For their own benefit you eject them from your space. Your life is way too short and precious for you to be spending a single brain cell, a single second, dealing with somebody who just doesn't like you.

So, fuck them. Ignore them. If they try to pipe up in your social media, email, your business, whatever, just like block them, ignore them, they are not worth your time in any way. People who are mean to you, people who are malicious towards you, people who are cruel towards you, people who are abusive towards you, people who don't like who you are, fuck them.

I just give you blanket permission to just kick those people out of your lives. It's better for them, better for you. Okay? That's the first, the purest, kind of hater.

Now, there's a second kind of hater. The second kind of people that we can sometimes call haters, are people who are maybe saying something uncomfortable to you. But they are people who are hurting and need healing. And are projecting their hurt onto you, when it has actually nothing to do with you.

This kind of thing, you can tell is happening when there's a really oversized response that doesn't actually match what's happening. Let's say you, I don't know, sent a marketing email about gardening, and someone just emailed you back, flying into a fit of rage about a particular gardening metaphor you used. Saying that it triggered all of their childhood abuse,

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pain, and that you are a horrible person for hurting them in this way. I just made up that example.

But you were like, “This was a marketing email about my coaching practice. I was just talking about growing roses in my garden. You are so activated, that I can like feel the fumes coming off of the screen.”

When something is a very outside or dramatic response to something that's honestly not that big of a deal, it's a pretty reliable clue that this is not about you. It's not about you. This has happened many, many times, in the many years of me marketing and being in business and interacting with lots of people.

Where someone will just have a sudden, super-heated, oversized, dramatic response to something that is not even a thing. That usually happens because someone is hurting. They have a wound, a big wound, that needs healing. It got triggered, and they are just throwing it at you. But it's not about you.

It can be pretty activating to be on the receiving end of that. If you observe for a while, you can kind of tell when this is happening. Like, “Wow, you're super angry at me, and you don't even know me. You're super angry at me, and all you've seen is two sentences that I wrote on Instagram.

These are the times when it's clear, “Oh, it's not about me. There's something inside them where they're hurting and they need a good therapist. They need a good coach. They need someone to help them to heal what that is.” So, when you see that happening, when there is a projection happening... and this is how I categorize it in my mind... I'm like, “Okay, this is not about me. It's about them and their pain.”

If it's a client or a friend or somebody that I actually have a relationship with, then I might work on sort of untangling all of that, and holding space for them. But if they're just a random person on Instagram, a random person who ended up on your email list, then I would say, my

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recommendation is, to just leave it alone. It's not about you. It's not about you.

The best example I can think of actually, is one time... You know I like to bag on Donald Trump, because he's such a great example, that I can easily pull to just talk about how you shouldn't be as a human being.

One time, I made a comment in one of my emails, that was actually a pretty light-hearted joke, that made Donald Trump look bad, because he's a bad man. I got this scathing email and it was full of conspiracy theories and how I am a despicable human being because I'm buying into this anti-Trump stuff. It was a long, long, scathing email. I was like, "Wow, this is not about me." You know what I mean?

So, not everything is going to be that dramatic, but sometimes it is. And so, it's like, "Okay, this is not about me. Let it go." Unless I'm their therapist, I'm not responsible for healing this. You send them love. You send them good wishes for healing, and then you let it go. Okay? Some of those people, our brain categorizes as haters, but you let it go.

Now, here's the third category of "haters," that I think actually a lot of people have a difficult time being able to distinguish. And that is, people who are actually just not the right fit for you. And they think how you are is the problem, and you should change.

These aren't bad people. These people don't hate you. They are just not the right fit for you. They should not become your clients. They probably shouldn't be part of your audience, because you're not a right fit for each other.

They should probably go find somebody that is a better fit for them. They should find a brand that's a better fit for them. But they keep staying around you, and telling you that you should be doing something different.

So, here's a good example. If you've been listening to this episode, if that's all you have heard from me, you already know that one, I hate Trump. And



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two, I curse a lot. Right? I drop the F bomb a lot. I am very outspoken about certain parts of my worldview and my politics, and I'm an unapologetic about that. That's just who I am. And if I were any other way, I wouldn't be myself, right?

So, for the people who are the right fit to be part of my audience, the right fit to be my clients, at best, they think it's hilarious and they fucking love it. And at worst, they're like, "It doesn't really bother me. Simone doesn't really share my exact politics. I personally don't love swearing. But I don't mind when Simone does it, because it's her being who she is. And I love, Simone." Right?

That's the range of attitudes that people have when they are the right fit for me. They either love you because of these things, or they don't necessarily love those things, but they just love you and they love you being yourself. Right?

So, if someone were like, "Simone, I think it's very inappropriate that you bring in these political opinions into your work. Why can't you just be a business coach talking about just marketing? Why can't you be a little bit more lady-like and not say, fuck, fuck, fuck all the time? You post too much, it's a little bit too much for me."

A lot of people tell me things as if I should change, when it's just not a fit. If you think I curse too much, don't tell me I should change. Go find that marketing coach who doesn't curse. You're not a bad person. I'm not a bad person. This is not a problem; we've just got to find people that we're a fit for.

So, I want you to remember that. I spent a lot of my life, when I was younger and more insecure, trying to contort myself, trying to change myself and edit myself, to be palatable for people who just weren't a good fit for me. I thought I had to be cooler. I thought I had to know about certain things to be considered worthy of friendship by certain people.

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And at one point, I realized, I was like growing up and I realized, hey, if I have to try so hard to be something other than just how I am naturally, with no effort, they're probably not a good fit to be friends with me. And then, I kind of let that go. That was the best decision ever.

So, just notice. People will couch this as constructive feedback. Like, "I don't think it's good for you, that you curse so much," for example. "I don't think it's professional that you talk about politics. I don't think you should be doing this like this. I think you should be doing it like that. I'm telling you for your own good."

A lot of people will tell you that they're telling you these things for your own good, when what's really going on is that they just don't like how you are, they don't like the way you do things, and they think you should be different. And what's really happening, is that they should not be in your world, because they're not a good fit for what you have to offer.

When it's a good fit, it's easy. There's just appreciation in both directions. And it's easy to appreciate them. It's easy to enjoy them. I always say, "If it's hard to enjoy who I am and how I present, I'm not a good fit for you."

We all deserve to be around people that are easy for us to enjoy. I want friends that are easy for me to enjoy. I want romantic partners that are easy for me to enjoy. Well, I already have one that I married, but if I were single and dating I would want to be around someone that's easy for me to enjoy. And, you deserve an audience that thinks you're easy to enjoy.

So, if anybody's not that, gently release them, and don't worry about what they're saying any further. Because for you to be less of yourself would be tragic.

Now the final type... So, let me just review. We've covered three different kinds of "haters" so far. One, people who just don't like you and are mean about it. They can fuck off. Number two, people who are really hurting inside and need healing, and they're projecting their wound onto you. You just let them go, and you send them best wishes for healing.

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And number three, people who think you should be different, but that's just because they're not the right fit for you. Once again, just release them, wish them the best. And, don't you dare change who you are.

The final one, is with where it's sort of the trickiest, right? The final type, is the people who have uncomfortable feedback that you may or may not want to learn from. Somebody says something, and you're like, "Oh, man, do they have a point? Should I think about that? Did I mess up? Do I want to do this differently in the future? Should I introspect about that?"

This is hard. I think the reason this is hard is because a lot of the times, at least in my experience with the kind of clients that I tend to get, it's really hard to tell the difference between when something is genuinely a learning opportunity. And when something is just self-shame, right?

I want to offer you some questions to help you sift through whatever's there. So, if somebody has uncomfortable feedback, let's say somebody thinks, "You could be doing better work."

Maybe somebody thinks you let them down, maybe you disappointed somebody, maybe you hurt somebody, and they're not so easy to write off. So, you're like, "You know what? I think they might have a point."

One question that you want to ask yourself is: Is this the kind of person, whoever's giving you this feedback, is this who I want to grow with? Is this the kind of audience member or client that I want more of in my future?

So, let me give you an example. One of my students asked me this question about a client of theirs; they've been coaching this client. They said, that the client was just giving them glowing praise, glowing testimonials, "You changed my life. This work is better than anything I've had in the past. You're a genius. I'm so grateful for you. This is the best investment ever...You're so amazing."

Then, at the end of that email, this client said, "The only thing I have a problem with is how expensive you are. I think you should be charging

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less.” This student of mine, was really confused about this mixed bag of feedback, right?

On the one hand, it's just totally glowing words of praise and appreciation and gratitude, and how this was so incredible, and life changing. And at the end, there's, “The only issue I have is that you're expensive.” And my client said, “Is this feedback that I need to take into consideration? Is this constructive feedback, or is it something else?”

I asked this student this question, “Do you want more people like this in the future? Is this the kind of client you want more of? Clients who think the world of your coaching skills, who have benefited so much and are willing to sing your praises to high heavens, except they think you're too expensive? Do you want to attract more of these clients?”

That student said, “Nope, I don't. I don't want to work with people who think I'm too expensive.” And then, I said, “Okay, well, there you have it. If you don't want more of someone like this, then you do not have to take their feedback to heart. Right?”

So, that's one question that I want to ask. Whoever's giving you the feedback, is this the kind of person that you want more of, in the future of your business? If not, then that's probably a sign that actually, that person is just not a good fit for your business at this time, or in the future.

Once again, it doesn't mean they're a bad person. It doesn't mean you should have never talked to them. It just means, huh, you tried something mutually, and it didn't turn out to be a good fit.

Now, there's a second possibility when somebody gives you uncomfortable feedback, and that is to ask yourself the question of, “Okay, so, somebody was disappointed, somebody was hurt, somebody thinks I should be doing something better, I messed up with something.” You do want to ask yourself, “Okay, I have the opportunity to improve on this. I have the opportunity to reflect and learn about this. Do I want to?”

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That's an interesting question that I think not enough people ask themselves: Is learning from this something that I want to prioritize? Because a lot of people think that every opportunity that we have to grow and learn, we should take it. Especially those of us in the self-development, coaching spaces. We're like, "Oh, growth opportunity. Of course, I should take it."

I actually disagree with that. I don't think we need to take every opportunity to grow ourselves. Life, just as it is, already gives us enough growth challenges. Growth takes a lot of energy; I don't have to take every fucking opportunity to grow.

Personal growth is really important to me. Spiritual growth is really important to me. But you know what else is important to me? Enjoying my life, enjoying myself, having fun with my business.

Sometimes the imperative to grow competes with my imperative to just enjoy what I have. And in some cases, not all, I choose the enjoyment over growth. Sometimes I choose growth, even when it's uncomfortable.

I don't always have to. I could probably grow in lots and lots of areas, I know I could. But there's many, many areas where I choose not to grow, because I don't exist to constantly improve and perfect myself. A big part of the reason God made me, at least in my opinion, is to enjoy myself and enjoy being alive.

So, ask yourself, from a shame free place: If you knew that you were already perfectly good enough, do you want to grow and learn in this area if you'd still be perfectly worthy if you chose not to?

I want you to grow because you want to, not because you don't think you're worthy without it. You don't think you're a good person if you don't take this growth opportunity. Because you think you'd be lazy, unworthy; any of these things.

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I think this is such an important principle that not enough people talk about. You don't have to take every opportunity to grow. Sometimes people say, "You know what, Simone? You'd be better at what you do if you did X-Y-Z. If you had better..."

And I'm like, "Yeah, I agree with you. I would be probably a better teacher or a better coach, better businesswoman, whatever, if I did those things. And I choose not to, because I feel pretty good about where I am." Right?

So, I just want to give you that message in case it's something you really needed to hear. In my experience, from my clients, a lot of people need to hear it.

The other question that I want to you ask yourself when you get uncomfortable feedback is, "Hey, is this triggering something in me that I don't want to look at? Is this triggering something that I'd rather avoid?" If there's a charge around that, that tells you a lot.

What am I invested in that I'm scared to have challenged? What identity am I holding on to that feels threatened by this? What am I afraid to let go of, that I would have to let go up if I really thought about this?

Some of the juiciest inner growth I've had came from asking myself these questions. Like, "If I take this feedback into consideration, what does that threaten inside me? What do I think I have to lose? What's the fear that rises up? What's that all about? How do I give myself comfort? How do I give myself love?"

"How do I reach into the well of resilience and resourcefulness inside me, so that I can approach this from something other than fear or defensiveness or shame? How do I walk myself to my wisdom in these moments? How do I care for myself and heal myself without regarding the other as the enemy, or without regarding myself as the enemy?"

"If there is nothing wrong with the other person, and if there's nothing wrong with me, there is no good and bad. There's no better or worse, we're all just

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humans learning. What's something that's here, if anything, that I want to take to grow myself?"

These are some really, really good questions. And a lot of us, let's be honest, use growth as a kind of weapon against ourselves. When we are constantly beating ourselves up to grow, grow, grow, instead of ending up more evolved, we end up exhausted.

How you know that shame is driving this grow-grow-grow imperative, is that you feel bad about who you are, rather than feeling curious about how you can learn. Remember that difference. The desire for growth, if it really is about growth, coming from a place of self-advocacy and self-celebration, mainly produces curiosity and expansive engagement.

And shame, on the other hand, it's the opposite energy. It's like a furling inward. Not in a self-reflective way, but in a way where you're making yourself smaller, like you need to hide, like you need to crawl into a hole. That's shame.

So, you could probably feel the difference in your body when I say these things, right? The kind of expansive curiosity towards your own growth, versus the shame of 'I'm a bad person.' In these moments especially, I want to offer that you can practice kind of expanding into that emotional state of self-advocacy, self-celebration.

And from those places, you get to be curious about. "I don't have to grow about anything. I'm already good enough. I'm already worthy. I'm already a good person. So, do I want to learn from this? Can I enjoy who I am and love who I am and learn from this, to be more of who I want to be?"

I think, this is easier and easier the more you have developed a habit of intentional self-advocacy and self-celebration. What I mean by self-advocacy, is you being able to stand up for yourself. It's like having a really good lawyer, internal lawyer, on your own side, right?

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Anything anyone can say about you, you can hire that lawyer, and that lawyer is like, “Well, actually, in my client’s defense...” and they talk about how wonderful you are, and there's nothing wrong with you.

Self-celebration means just that. It's not just loving yourself. It's not just respecting yourself. It's celebrating yourself.

That's a special kind of love that I wish for everyone. I wish for you to celebrate yourself. I wish for you to be able to advocate for yourself fiercely. And when you have that foundation of safety, because you know you have your own back, I think it's so much easier to open your heart to uncomfortable, even painful, feedback.

So, I really want you to look from this lens of really having your own back, and knowing that your goodness is uncompromisable, your worthiness is already infinite. Even if you change nothing about who you are and how you did anything, you would already be infinitely amazing, beautiful, beloved, worthy, valuable human being.

From that place, consider, “Do I want to grow?” That place gives you so much more flexibility. It affords you so much more curiosity, and so much more capacity for learning and growth.

This is kind of how I navigate constructive feedback. Any kind of feedback that feels at first, to my fragile ego, like, “Oh, that's a hater. Somebody's saying, Simone, I think you should do this differently. Simone, I think you messed up here. Simone, I think you made a mistake.” My first default knee-jerk ego response is, “Hater.”

Then I take a step back, and I ask myself these questions: What kind of response is happening here? What kind of questions do I want to ask myself, to discern whether this is something I want to engage in? Whether I want to learn from this? How do I learn from it, if I learn from it from a place of having my own back?

So, this episode ended up being a little bit profound, about self-love. But I think that really is the key to dealing with haters. I'm never going to say it's



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easy and fun dealing with haters. It's not. I have a lot of experience, and I've developed a lot of inner resilience. But, hey, I'm still human. I'm a very sensitive human, at that.

I have a lot of emotions, and it hurts my feelings every time. Every time I've experienced a hater, of any kind. Anytime. Even if it's a totally random person, I'm like, "Why do you hate me, random person? You don't even know me. If you knew me, you would like me."

There's a part of me that wants everyone to love me. Even if a different part of me knows that's not going to be reality, ever. There's a part of me that's tender, and I think that's important for me to keep, that part of me that's tender. It's important for me to be the sensitive human being that I am, because I think that's part of what makes me awesome, to be honest.

These are the questions that I use as a guide, so that I can be in integrity with myself and love myself and enjoy life, and be growing at the same time.

All right, I think that's enough. I hope that was useful. I'll talk to you next week. Bye.

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