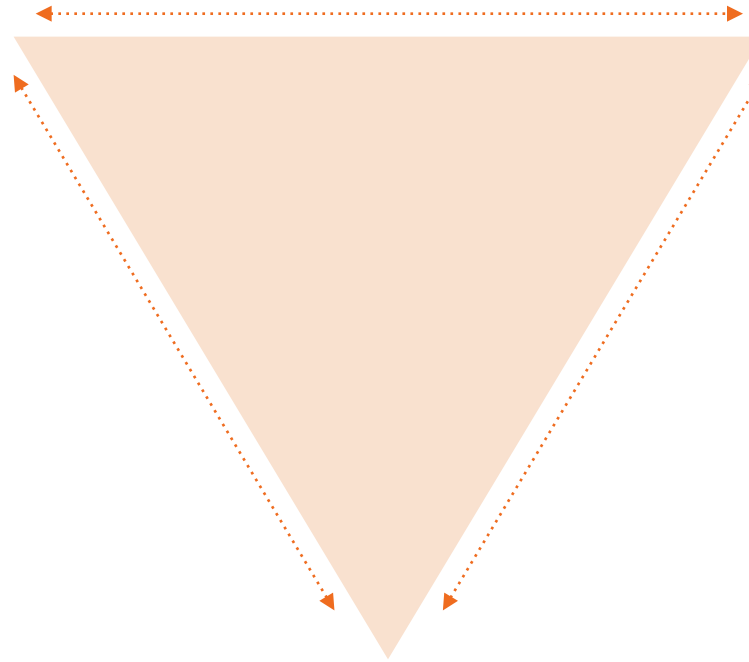


# The Drama Triangle

(Steven Karpman, 1968)

## RESCUER

'Saves' people he/she sees as vulnerable. Works hard, offers 'help' unasked for.



## PERSECUTOR

Unaware of his/her own power and therefore discounting it. Power used is negative and often destructive.

## VICTIM

Overwhelmed by his/her own vulnerability. Doesn't take responsibility for own situation.



# PERSECUTOR

(Bully) to Challenger

“This is your fault”

“You are not OK but I am, so do what I tell you”

- Critical of others
- Puts others down
- Blames and finger-points
- Keeps **victims** down
- Driven by anger/resentment
- Rigid in thinking
- Bossy
- Dominating.

Move to **Challenger** with **Clear Structure**

**State boundaries:**

“I am willing to listen to your story for ten minutes.”

**Actively listen:**

“I am willing to listen to your problem without making it mine to solve.”

**Make exceptions clear:**

“I want you to keep your agreement. Please have it done by Tuesday.”

**Provide choices:**

“You can either keep your agreement or I will no longer be involved. You choose.”

# Stop the Drama



We move around the triangle until one of us moves out and into a clear and healthy communication pattern.

**Be THE ONE**

Be the change you want in the conversation.

# VICTIM

(Helpless) to Survivor/Thrifer

“Poor me. I give up.”

“I’m not OK and everybody else is.”

Move to **Survivor/Thrifer** with **Problem Solving**

# RESCUER

(Saviour) to Coach

“You need my help”

“You are not OK but I am nice and will fix you.”

- Provides support when doesn't want to
- Feels guilty and anxious if doesn't rescue
- Feels connected when **victim** is dependent
- Rescuing creates sense of being capable
- Often expects to fail in **rescue mission**.

Move to **Coach** with **Clear Support**

**Give the message:**

“I care about you and I know you are capable.”

**Do nothing that the other can do for him/herself:**

“I know you can do this.”

**Actively listen:**

“I am willing to listen to your problem without making it mine to solve.”

**State boundaries:**

“I am willing to listen for twenty minutes.”

**Provide choices:**

“I will listen for fifteen minutes now or you may call back next Tuesday. You choose.”

- Feels oppressed, hopeless, ashamed, powerless, incapable and misunderstood
- Seeks to hook up with a **rescuer** to validate the above feelings
- Refuses to make decisions, solve problems, get professional help, do self-care or change.

**State what you want:** and take action

**Keep Agreements:** If someone helps, do your part by following through.

**Ask yourself:** “How can I get what I really want in a healthy way?”

**Count your blessings:** Acknowledge your strengths and what is going well.

**Remember:** You make you! And You're stronger than you think!