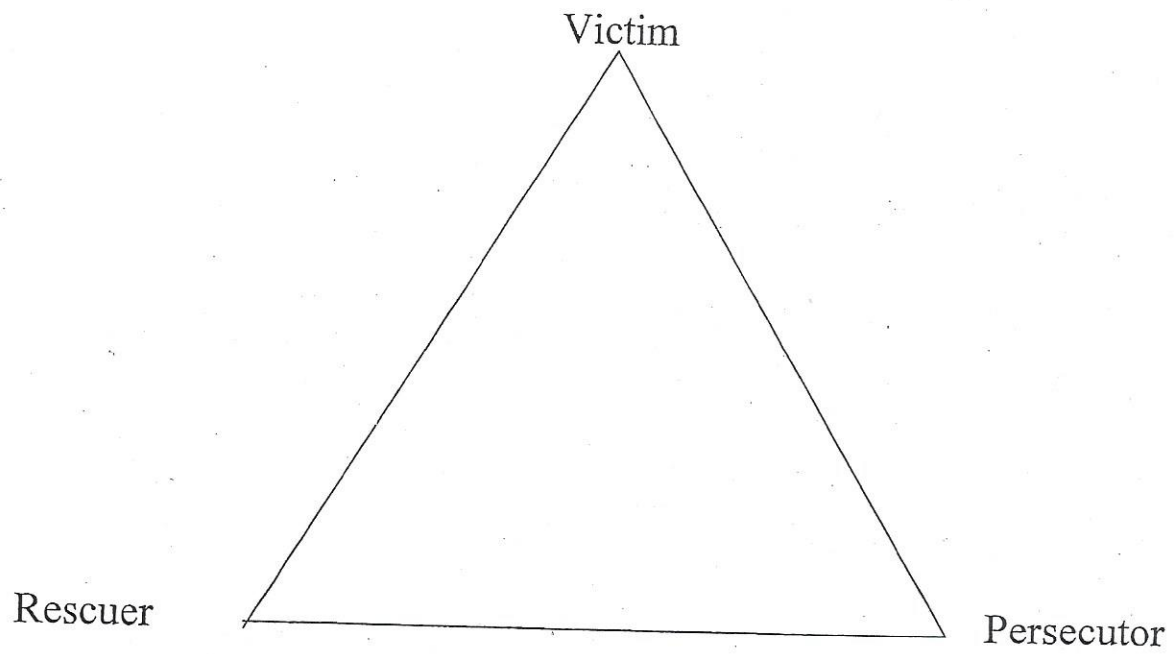


Karpman Drama Triangle



Victim:

When we allow past events to claim us rather than us claiming the events, we run the risk of staying stuck in the event and taking on the victim identity.

- Victims take insufficient responsibility for their actions or feelings
- Truly believe that they are life's fall guy
- Use catastrophic language to describe what [everyone, you, my mother, the government, etc.] is doing to them
- Play poor me role and it can be either pathetic or with anger
- Are looking for a rescuer. They hope to hook someone into taking care of them by using blame and guilt instead of asking directly for help
- The victim position is the key role in the triangle because it is the position the other roles revolve around

Rescuer:

Feel guilty if they don't rescue

Feel awful if they do rescue and feel manipulated into doing something other than feeling their own position

Try to alleviate guilt (being bad) by doing something good

Must have a victim to play out this role

Have expectations of "repayment" and when these expectations are not met, move into the Persecutor role

Rescuing Behaviors

Enabling

Not confronting

Fixing

Buying gifts

People pleasing

Not setting boundaries

Denying

Having or withholding sex

Tolerating

Eliminating consequences

Keeping secrets

Persecutor:

- Rarely consciously chooses this role
- Abuse others emotionally, mentally, physically and spiritually
- Perpetrate through a number of different actions including:

Criticizing	Teasing
Humiliating	Withdrawing
Being late	Sarcasm
Finger pointing	Affairs
Spending	Hitting
Yelling	

When we are in the drama triangle our behavior is based on fear. All 3 of the roles give an illusion of:

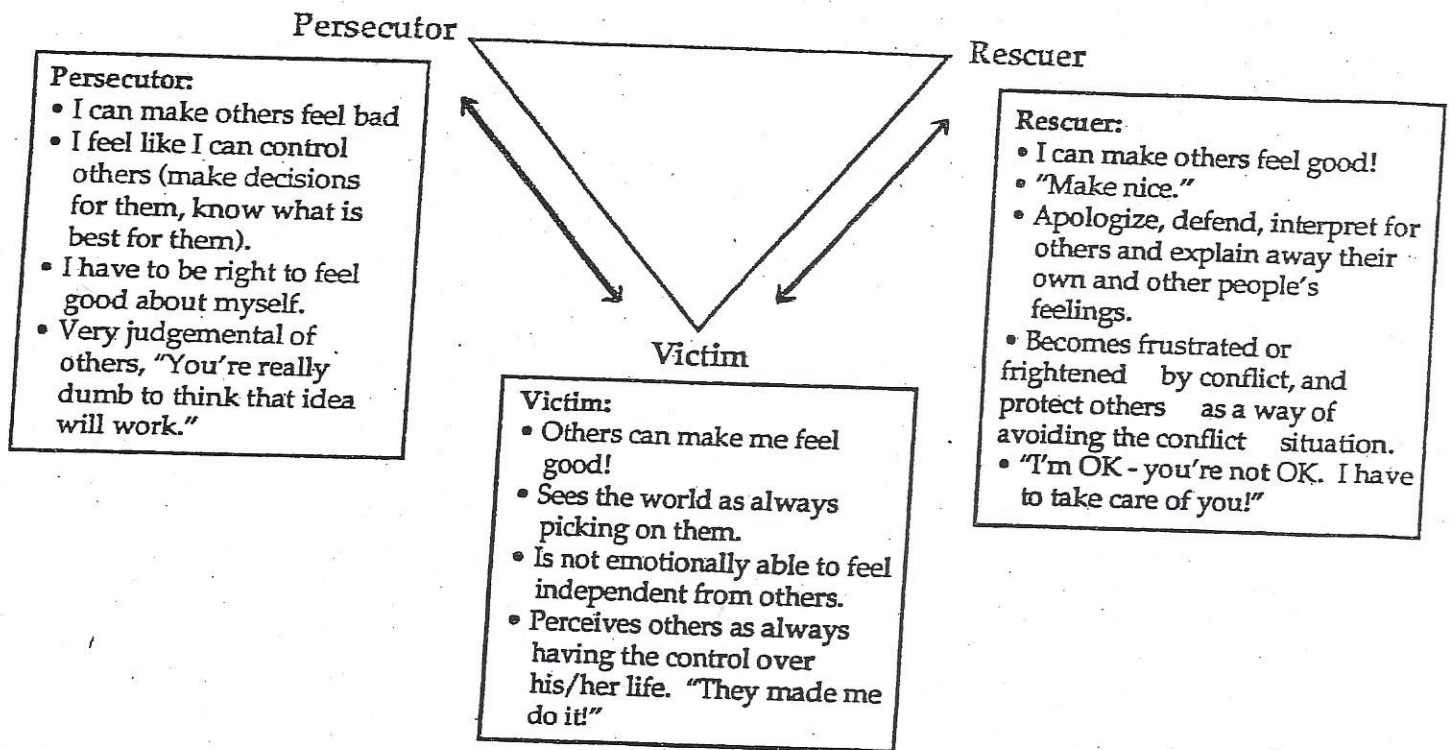
Power	Love
Safety/Security	Belonging
Self-Worth	Identity
Connection	Freedom
Trust	Acceptance
The need to be right	

- Everyone has a preferred starting point (e.g. rescuer, victim); this is where you get “hooked” or enter the process.
- Once you are in the process you will eventually play all the roles – like it or not, the triangle robs you of your free choice
- The triangle is based on lies – whether it is about a situation\circumstances or feelings, the lie moves you into the addictive process
- All “shoulds” are a lie – therefore remember “should” will throw you into the triangle
- There is no power in the triangle – all the positions render you powerless
- Guilt and fear are the processes hook – healthy responses to fear and guilt are put in place by setting boundaries, telling the truth and experiencing your emotions. This is your way off of the triangle
- You must be able to tolerate being viewed as a Persecutor; knowing that you are viewed as one doesn’t make you one

SOME ROLES WE PLAY IN LIFE TO PREVENT AUTONOMY IN OURSELVES OR IN OTHERS

The "Drama Triangle" (or "Karpman Triangle") is a convenient way to understand some of the negative patterns we use to get into "bad" feelings and to undercut autonomy.

The bad feelings and loss of power occur as persons play Rescuer or Persecutor games with others, and as movement occurs from one role to another (as from Rescuer to Victim, Rescuer to Persecutor, Victim to Persecutor, etc.).



The Rescuer looking for a Victim thinks "I can make others feel good."

The Persecutor looking for a Victim thinks, "I can make others feel bad."

The Victim looking for a Rescuer thinks, "Others can make me feel good."

The Victim looking for a Persecutor thinks, "Others can make me feel bad."

The truth is that each of us controls how good or bad, how strong or weak we feel. I do not have that power over you, and you do not have that power over me.

Notice that the Rescuer and Persecutor both operate from the I'm OK, You're Not OK position, while the Victim is in a I'm Not OK position. Persons in an I'm OK - You're OK position are not in the roles at all.

Avoiding all the roles in the triangle allows us to get in touch with our own power to take charge of our lives, and leaves others free to do the same.

Boundaries – What are They?

- A boundary is a limit that promotes integrity
- A boundary sets a physical, emotional, intellectual or spiritual space
- A boundary is a way to protect ourselves and not a way to create walls
- A boundary can be either spoken or unspoken

Reasons to Set Boundaries

- We set boundaries in order to demonstrate self respect and to protect ourselves from inappropriate behavior
- We set boundaries to increase our sense of self-worth
- We set boundaries in order to achieve greater intimacy
- We set boundaries to take care of ourselves; not to control, manipulate or change other's behavior

Common Barriers to Boundary Setting

- Fear
- Guilt
- Dependency, either financial or emotional