

THE DRAMA TRIANGLE



Sometimes we mistake conflict for drama. They are not the same thing.

Conflict is tension between competing positions, ideas or needs. True conflict is the raw material for positive innovation. Conflict is change trying to happen.

Drama is a disruptive, self-perpetuating cycle of three interrelated roles that people play:

Victim

They tend to think they are powerless, incapable, helpless and might feel hopeless – denying their own agency and ability. Victims feel intrinsically defective or hard done by and want kid glove treatment.

Villain

May tend to blame others and criticise others without providing guidance, assistance or offering a solution to the underlying problem. Perceived as persecutors, they may be critical and unpleasantly blunt in their communication. They may or may not be aware of the effect their communication style has on others.

Hero

Heroes love to rescue people, unaware that they simply perpetuate the problem. They can sometimes enable and/or disable others by doing things for them that they could and should do for themselves. Rescuers can sometimes make themselves indispensable to others as this satisfies their own personal need to be needed.

The Solution

The simple solution to the drama triangle is to help people to be aware of the roles they are playing and institute a 'no triangles' rule. **It's the idea that we don't talk *about* people, we talk *to* them.** So if person A has an issue with person B, then they need to address that issue directly with the person involved.

And if person C is asked to become involved (thus creating a triangle and a potential drama scenario) they need to avoid the temptation to step in as a rescuer and encourage instead that A and B discuss their issue together and seek a positive resolution together.

For more on the Drama Triangle, click [HERE](#)

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