

CLARIFY



ENERGISE



ENCOURAGE



STRETCH

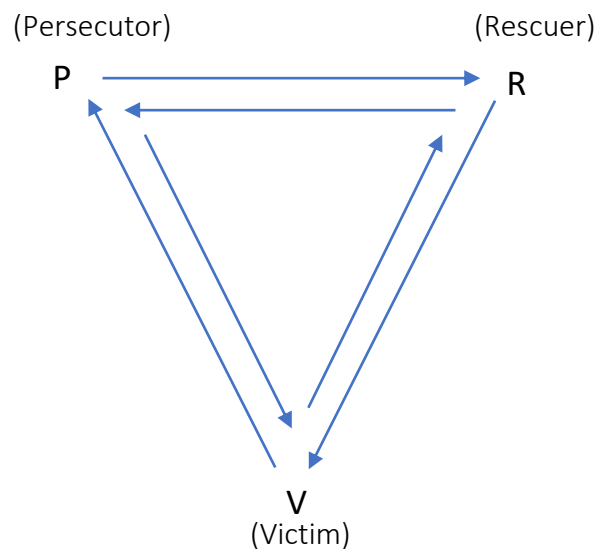


CEES MODEL™

## Kaarpman's Drama Triangle (1968)

Can you think of a time when you were caught up in a 'drama'? A time when feelings ran high, and you found yourself wanting to help, blame or wallow in self-pity?

In these situations, Kaapman suggested that we fall into 3 types of learned behaviour: Persecutor, Rescuer or Victim. What's important to note is that there are payoffs for each of these positions, by which I mean each person is getting something out of it:



- A **Persecutor** likes having someone to punish and blame. They feel better about themselves by putting someone else down.
- A **Rescuer** feels better about themselves when they are able to help someone else. They 'need to be needed' and focus on fixing other people's problems rather than their own.
- The **Victim** is playing out a powerless script, a set of beliefs that absolve them from taking responsibility and being proactive. They feel better about themselves when they are being helped or punished. The dog that is kicked is providing a service.

A useful additional insight is that – once in the drama – we're likely to move round and round the positions. For example, maybe we begin at RESCUE (*"Helping feels good. At least I'm not in their situation. I feel empowered solving their problem..."*) Until, in the fullness of time we either, a, tire of helping; or b, our own needs start shouting so loudly that we have to divert our attention, breaking the psychological contract with the VICTIM who's become reliant on our support. So now the Rescuer moves to either the Persecutor (*"How dare they make such unreasonable demands upon me... They are a selfish narcissist!"*) or the Victim, (*"I'm trapped. This is very difficult. I have my own responsibilities to take care of, but there's nothing I can do. It's so hard to be me!"*)

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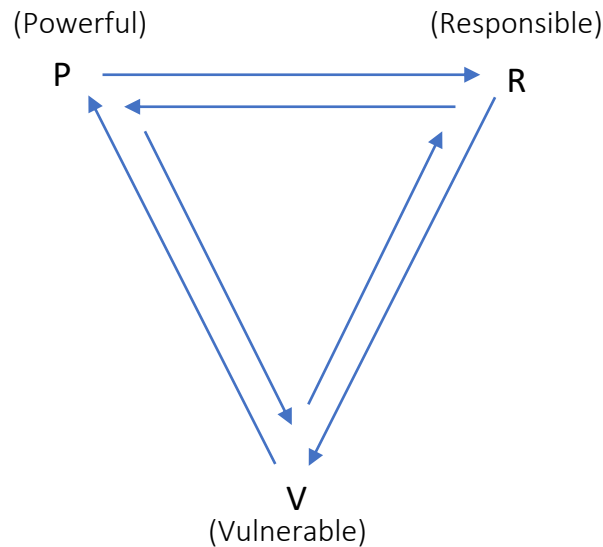
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CEES MODEL™

## Choy's 'Winner's Triangle' (1990)

The Winner's triangle suggests a way out of the drama:



- From *Persecutor* to **Powerful** – I am able to set boundaries, say no, and recognize what's mine to do and what's yours' to do. I don't need to discharge my negative feelings through blame, but name the problem and explore creative ways forward.

- From *Rescuer* to **Responsible** – I don't have to help, but I may choose to help. I don't need to be the answer, because whoever holds the problem also has the potential, creativity and resilience to find their own solutions. If they're asking me for help, does it really benefit them in the long run for me to help? Or am I enabling? Or am I really meeting my own needs? When I help I will do so from a generosity of spirit that has boundaries and a clear idea of what I want in return.

- From *Victim* to **Vulnerable** – I am not bad, but my situation is challenging. But I am resourceful and creative. I can do something, even if all I can think of is to ask for help. If I ask for help it's an admission of my limits. There's no shame in that. And if I'm turned down then I will explore my other options.

Which position do you think is your most frequent doorway into drama?

How might this model help you coach or lead in a way that has an even more positive impact?