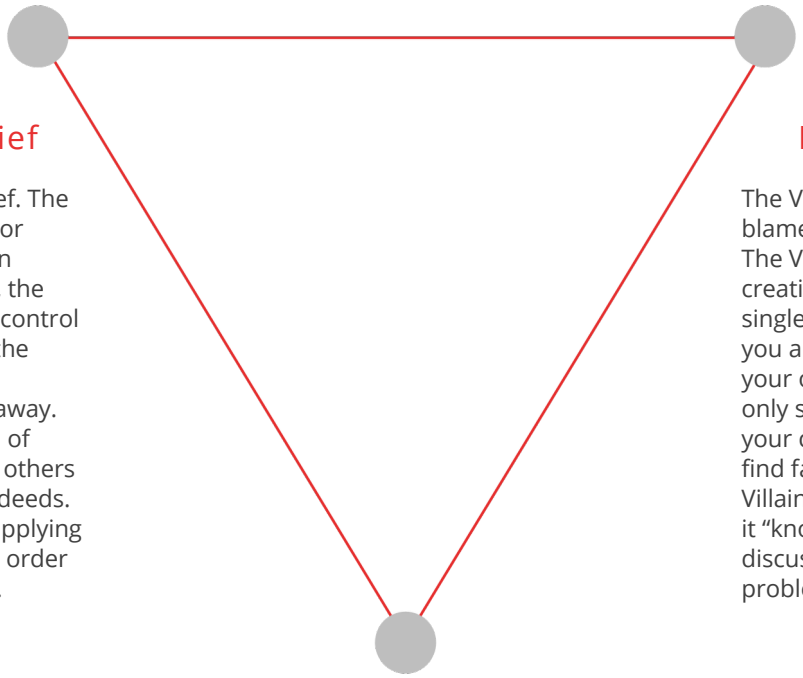
THE DRAMA TRIANGLE

Understanding the three roles of victimhood



HERO

Seeks temporary relief

The Hero seeks temporary relief. The Hero looks for suffering inside or outside of itself. But rather than feeling helpless, like the Victim, the Hero assumes that it is able to control or change the situation. Thus, the Hero reacts to pain by finding temporary ways to make it go away. Heroes act with an expectation of reward; specifically that you or others will "feel better" because of its deeds. The Hero plays out its role by applying a "solution" to the "problem" in order to avoid feelings or discomfort.

HEROES SAY:

I can handle it.

Poor you.

I can save it.

I need to figure this out.

This will make me feel better.

You need me.

I'll keep you from harm.

Don't worry, look on the bright side.

You can do it!

I'm outta here!

I'll help you get your act together.

You can always count on me!

I don't want to upset anyone.

VILLAIN

Blames self & others

The Villain focuses on blame. They blame themselves or others or "them." The Villain position attempts to diminish creative awareness by focusing on a single, convenient answer. You will know you are in the Villain position if you feel your opinion is absolutely correct, and only search for evidence that supports your claims. The Villain's main goal is to find fault, who caused the problem. The Villain plays out its role by declaring that it "knows" and is "right" thus stifling open discussion and keeping attention on the problem.

VILLAINS SAY:

I/you/they should….

I/you/they shouldn't…

You are doing it wrong.

You don't get it.

They are bad.

I'm not enough.

I can't forgive

me/you/them.

There is one way.

#$$%%*^& you!

I feel guilty.

You should know better.

You're not listening to me!

Duh!

I would never be like that.

VICTIM

Is at the effect of

Victims see themselves as "at the effect of" people, circumstances and conditions. They often experience themselves as disempowered. They avoid creative responsibility. You will know if you are in the Victim position if you feel powerless to effect change. The Victim plays out its role by a declaration of pain and suffering, as well as defeat. The Victim often complains and whines and/or argues for why it can't have what it wants. Once in this role, the victim is able to feel unique, as it waits for someone else to fix the problem.

VICTIMS SAY:

I can't

It's hard.

I have to…

I'm confused.

I don't have a choice.

I'm trying.

This is the way it is.

They don't get me.

I'm tired.

It's not fair.

There's not enough.

They did this to me.

Help me!

I don't know how.

Based on the work of Stephen Karpman