

Family patterns

Drama creates cracks in your relationships. When you attack each other and say hurtful things to win the argument, you also create an insecurity in the other person. *How could they say that if they didn't mean or think it?* In the long term, this can have a devastating effect on a person's mental health. You may just be repeating family patterns that you witnessed when you were growing up. If you thought your parents' arguing was 'normal' behaviour then you will probably accept it in your adult life. This might not be true for the other person in your life, so by exploring what your triggers are and learning a strategy for how to avoid manipulating people can save the relationship.

Communication skills

Now you've started to look at your core beliefs and understand what your triggers are, you may recognise that this can be a difficult process. Seek professional help to support yourself with change if it is very distressing for you. Here are 5 tips to help keep your relationships healthy:

1. Be respectful and polite always in the way you speak to people, like 'the honeymoon period' only extended
2. Avoid acting out the drama in your life
3. Power over someone isn't genuine love
4. If you like to be spoilt, find another way to ask loved ones for your needs
5. Be honest about your needs and as for the same back

Doing something rather than nothing is vital.

Other useful websites / organisations

- youngminds.org.uk
- nhs.uk
- mind.org.uk



We're Mind, the mental health charity. We're here to make sure anyone with a mental health problem has somewhere to turn for advice and support.

www.nsmind.org.uk

A Young Person's Guide to

Relationships



 mind
for better mental health

North Staffs

Are you good at relationships?

When we are first born we are like a blank canvas. We instinctively know how to cry for support, food, and security. However, that is pretty much it. By the time you are in high school you will have picked up many things from your surroundings and the people who have touched your life. We are all a product of our environment. Think about your own relationships with people who have or haven't cared enough for you, the people you lived with were they present or missing all the time, those who have nurtured you to learn new things and those who have simply enforced rules. All these relationships will have impacted on you as you have grown up.

Relationships are one of the most important parts of self-development. How we interact with those around us, how we relate to people, how we form friendships, how we learn to trust and accept other people, what roles we take on in a group situation or how we manage one to one scenarios can really affect our happiness. Imagine getting what you want from a relationship without conflict or manipulation.

Drama Scenario, Take 1

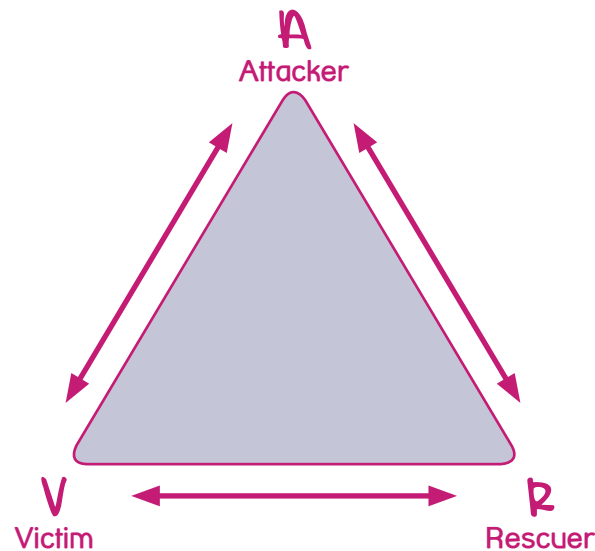
Girl going on a night out with her friends is suddenly accused of dressing provocatively by her partner. Does she: a) change her outfit? b) tell her boyfriend he's being rude or, c) feel upset that she looks 'tarty'?

Drama Scenario, Take 2

Husband comes home from work to find his wife relaxing on the sofa. Angrily, he asks why the food hasn't been made. Does she: a) ask him what his last slave died of? b) get upset as he's moaning already or, c) jump up and make the meal?

Drama in a triangle?

The Drama Triangle is everywhere and surrounds us all. You can find it in fairytales, on TV, in school, at work and most commonly, in your home. The main problem is that it is addictive, comforting, and seductive. It is also highly dangerous and dysfunctional, destroying healthy relationships and your long term mental health.



You need to be aware if you are caught or stuck in the drama triangle. Identify which role you normally take: Attacker, Victim, or Rescuer. Each is linked to the others, needing and supporting them, but not necessarily liking them. Manipulation is the "cement" holding it all together.

- Victims avoid responsibility. They seek to blame anything but themselves for their circumstances.
- Rescuers like to feel needed, appreciated, and loved.
- The Attackers want to feel powerful and have a sense of control.

Manipulation (versus)

People rarely put themselves in another's shoes otherwise they could not commit acts of drama. People seek power over others to get what they want. We all like to be spoiled.

Vulnerability

The common fact between the three of them is that none dare show their 'softer' side or the 'real' person, as they are too scared they won't have their own needs met.



Breaking the cycle

When most people learn about the triangle they want to know how to free themselves and save their relationships. Remember, it takes two people who both want to find a solution to an existing problem. It can be very damaging to your own mental health if the changes aren't working and you feel solely responsible for the failure. The other person must want to break the pattern, too. Don't forget that people naturally resist change, especially if it means not getting your own way as easily.

Attackers can stop by simply applying good old fashioned manners. Being respectful to other people's feelings and thankful for them being in your life.

Victims need to be more responsible in a relationship. Stopping telling tales and dropping the selfishness will overcome negative moods.

Rescuers can stop by simply backing off from a dysfunctional situation and being too 'needy'.