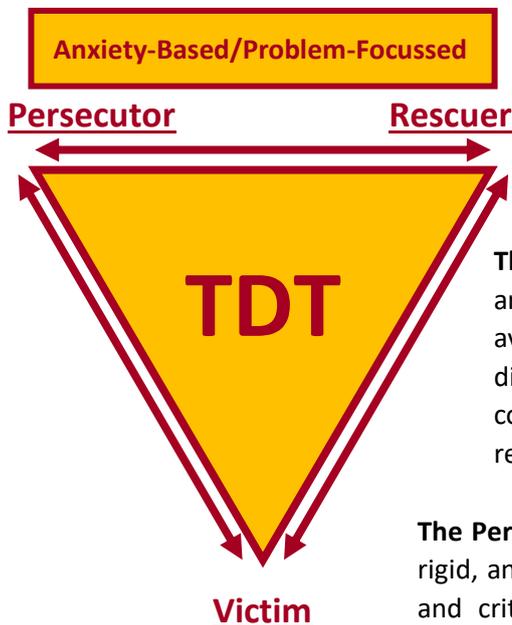




## The Drama Triangle and The Empowerment Dynamic

The Drama Triangle (TDT; Karpman, 1968) is a model of destructive/argumentative interaction between people who adopt a façade or role of “Persecutor”, “Rescuer”, or “Victim”. The Model states that through their own emotional vulnerability, people play a dysfunctional role to fulfil their needs, to protect their ego, and to avoid the risk of being emotionally real with another person or with oneself. The roles are pervasive and subtle, can morph from one role to another role, build stress, anxiety, resentment, and anger, and can be employed outside of conscious awareness.



**The Victim** feels helpless, hopeless, powerless, disempowered, dissatisfied with life, ashamed, overwhelmed, vulnerable, ill-equipped, and/or indecisive. When not being victimised, the Victim might seek a Persecutor or Rescuer who can resolve any current issues and perpetuate the victim’s negative sense of self. The Victim is affected by so much in life, e.g., job, weather, traffic, time, partner, kids and says “Poor little old me.”

**The Rescuer** feels the need to help, to be indispensable, to have the answers, to interfere, to be needed, to save the day, and to intervene to avoid feeling guilt. Such “Rescuing” behaviour can negatively enable and disempower others and conceals or avoids the Rescuers own issues or concerns. The Rescuer seeks temporary relief instead of permanently resolving issues so that the role can continue and says “Let me help you.”

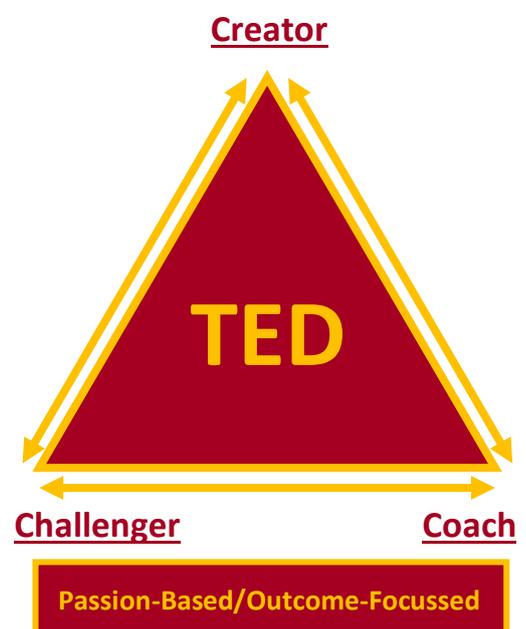
**The Persecutor** is angry, authoritarian, blaming, controlling, critical, oppressive, rigid, and “superior”. The Persecutor can keep the victim oppressed by bullying and criticising and can surface in oneself when feeling fed up with being victimised or underappreciated as a Rescuer. The Persecutor tends to critique and blame without providing solutions and says “It’s your fault.”

The Empowerment Dynamic (TED; Emerald, 2019), a set of roles that offer healthy and genuine alternatives to TDT, empowers people to make better life choices, to change one’s own Role behaviour, and to challenge, reject, or view the Roles of Victim, Persecutor, and Rescuer in others differently.

**The Creator** is empowered and satisfied with life, asserts and has self-belief, focuses on outcome not the problem, tries to resolve problems, takes ownership for their choices and responses to challenges, is self-aware, and says “I can do it!”

**The Coach** likes (but doesn’t need) to help, promote, support, assist, and encourage self reliance in the other person and in their informed choices and self-belief. Coaches empower and compassionately question (not solve) to seek clarity and positive action and say “How will you do it?”

**The Challenger** is assertive, conscious, constructive, and encouraging, aims to evoke (not coerce) learning, growth, and action, and says “You can do it!”



*Consider where, when, how, and with whom you and/or others adopt the various roles outlined here. Do you use these roles on yourself and/or on others? Why do you adopt these roles? What are the outcomes of adopting these roles? Is change required? Why would it be worth changing? Can you copy/challenge other people’s role behaviour?*