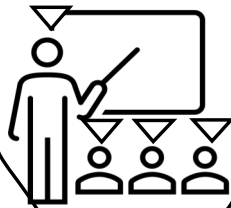


Stepping Off The Drama Triangle:

HELPING STUDENTS (& US)
NAVIGATE DIFFICULT INTERACTIONS



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EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE

From Gutzler:
www.stevegutzler.com

Self-Awareness

Knowing one's emotional impact on others. Knowing that your vocabulary and words matter and create impact on moods, attitudes, and emotions for you, your team, and your clients.

Self-Regulation

Controlling and redirecting disruptive impulses and moods for your team.

Self-Motivation

Discovering your "why" and aligning with your purpose — which includes honoring and respecting others.

Empathy

Understanding other people's emotional makeup and placing high value on the feelings of others. Emotions matter!

Social Skills

Building rapport, respect, and mutual admiration to create a cohesive team that moves in the desired direction is so important.

By Dawn McBride. For Horizon School District.
Using TA to promote EI & psychological safety in
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TEACHERS

“Effective leaders

manage the mood

of their organization

by employing abilities

known as

emotional intelligence”

(Gutzler)

We use our El toolbox when we:

- ☐ keep a pulse on the mood in the classroom;
- ☐ stay calm under pressure; our emotions impact our students;
- ☐ redirect things in a more positive direction (e.g., help students have patience & keep things in perspective);
- ☐ seek → support, feedback on our impact, & ways to expand our EI toolbox.

Adapted from Gutzler; Whitley-Hunter (2014)

TRANSACTIONAL ANALYSIS

A Canadian - authored theory that promotes awareness, self-responsibility, & change;

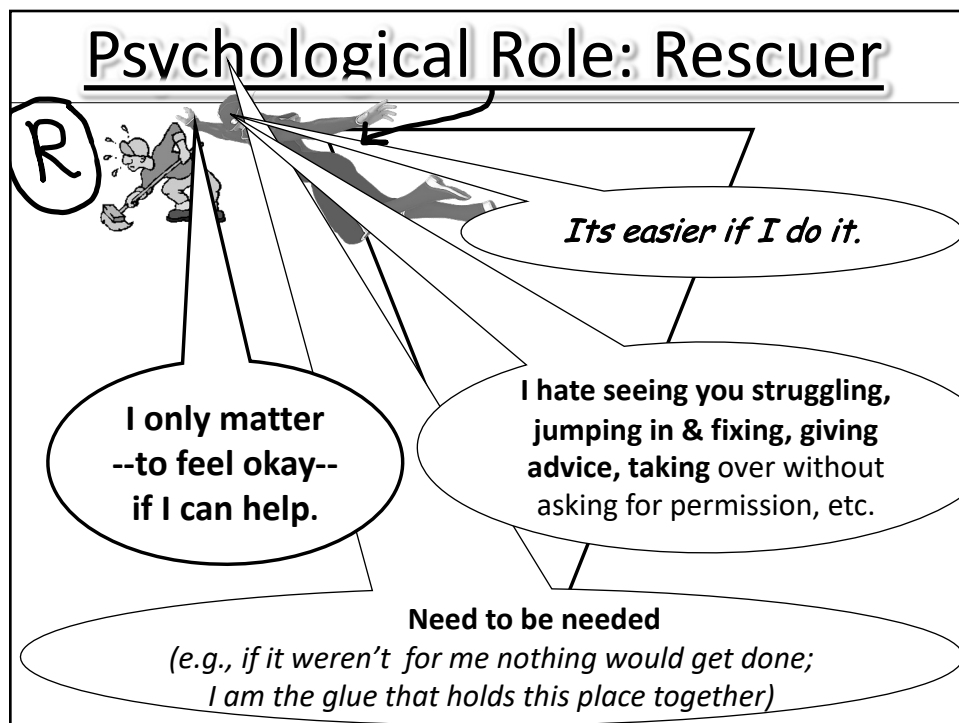
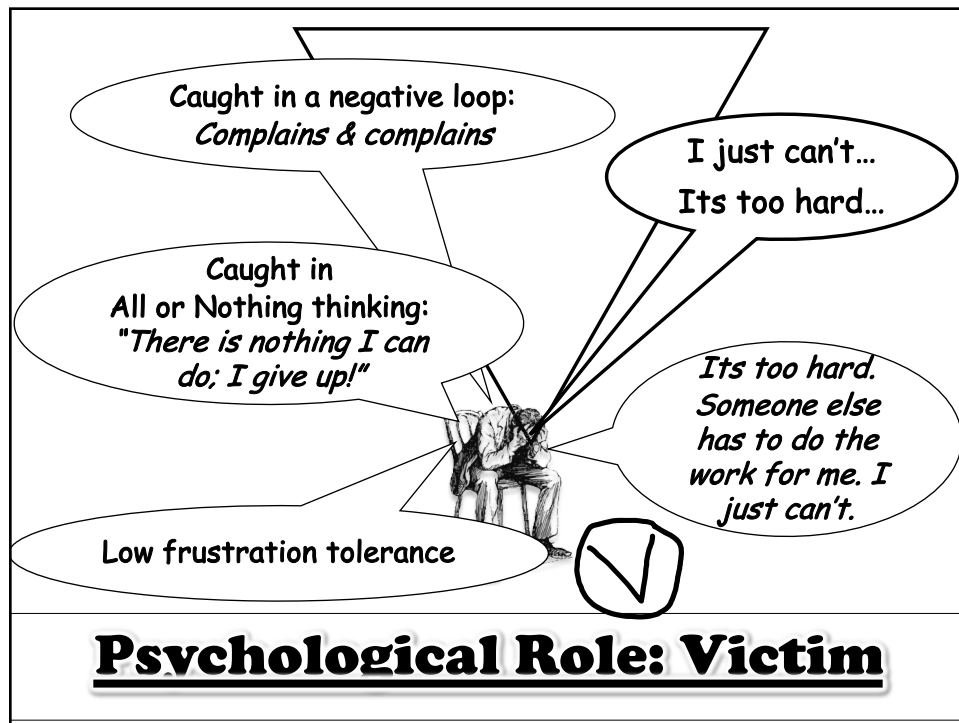
Used in leadership, organizations, classrooms, & counselling agencies.

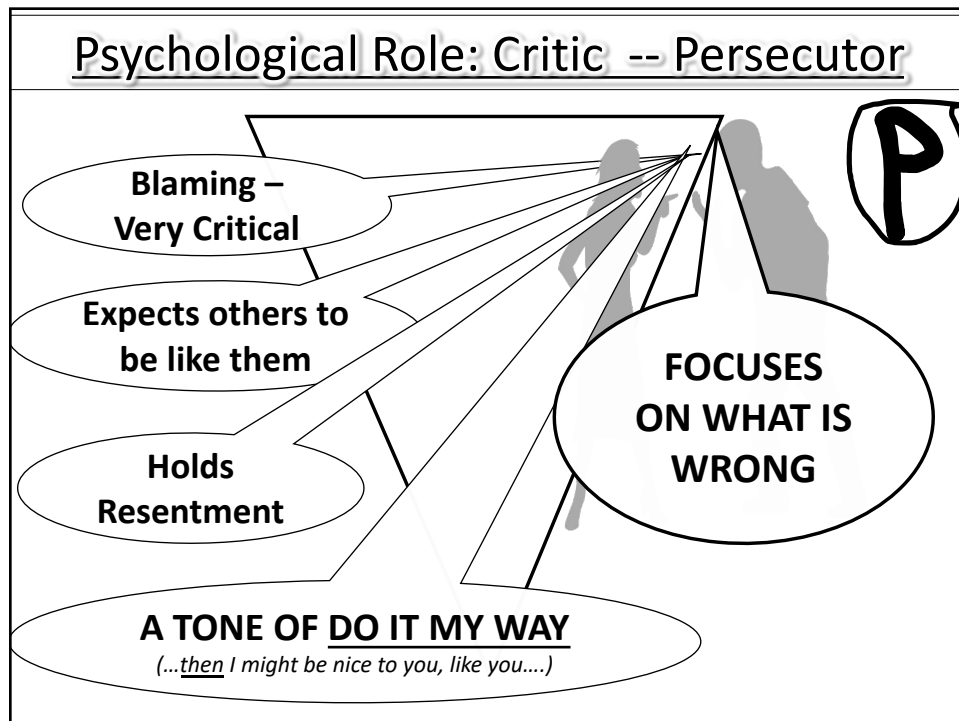
Transactional Analysis →

An EI tool that can help promote EI and psychological safety → in & out of the classroom
(e.g., reduce tension, promote connection/repair).

When We Encounter Stress – Conflict (Drama)

We May Adopt 1+ Psychological Roles ... Which Rarely Resolve The Issue





ROLES IN THE DRAMA- for protection: <u>What is really going on?</u>		
VICTIM	PERSECUTOR	RESCUER
		
I'm not okay.	You are <u>not</u> okay. But I'm okay.	I'm okay ONLY IF I can help.
Purpose: To Feel "Okay" (...to feel in control)		
E.g., • <u>To reduce feeling</u> helpless & overwhelmed tries to get others to take over. May have low tolerance for 'frustration'.	E.g., • <u>To avoid feeling</u> or thinking "I'm not capable," "not smart enough," or not in control, need to find ways to be in control.	E.g., • <u>To avoid feeling</u> may shift into "doing" mode (advice, fixing)

Reflection: Unpacking The Drama Triangle

1. What type of student  seems to invite you onto the triangle?

2. What is this student's drama triangle dance? e.g.,

- What psychological role is likely this student's starting point?
- What psychological role does this student hang out in the most?
- How do you know when this student is in each psychological role?
- What is the student's underlying motive when in each role? (e.g., what is the mask hiding? what vulnerability are they covering up?)

3. What is the drama dance (the map)? e.g.,

- When this student invites you onto the drama triangle, what psychological role do you take? Then what happens? Then what happens? Then what? Do you see a pattern?
- Feel free to answer the #2 questions from the perspective that perhaps you were the one maybe 'inviting' the student onto the DT 😊.



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EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE IS...

1. identifying when on the triangle.
2. intentionally leaving the position.

And, even when it is compelling.....

3. not joining the "group" who is on the DT.
4. not recruiting people to join your position 😊.

INVITING 'TAKING ACTION'

For example:

- ☐ Before asking them to take action, name the feelings. *E.g., Point to the feelings you relate to the most. Which feeling is the most intense? The least intense? Where do you feel it inside? Scale how intense it is)*
- ☐ Reflect several times on how you are 'really' understanding how much they are hurting/suffering (*slowing letting the air out of the balloon)
- ☐ Ask: *What they need right now? (DO NOT fix or solve.. This question just starts to plant a seed of a 'change' mindset). Validate their answer, then move to the next question.*
- ☐ Ask: *With all this stress you are under, what things are you doing that are NOT helping and maybe even making things worse? (*helps to shift off the story/content) And, what helps?*
- ☐ Shift slowly to talking about strengths (e.g., *How have you managed before? You have many strengths, "I've seen you do x, y, z."*)
- ☐ Ask if they are ready to get organized (e.g., *Shall we do a brain dump of everything to be done, then organize what needs to be done first?*)
- ☐ Other...

• Step back

- **Be curious...**
why someone
may be feeling
or doing
something
before
assuming it is
for a negative
reason.



For example:

Take a Step Back

Persecutor

- Break the impulse to act – put in a pause between trigger & action
- Needing control may be about avoiding a feeling – what is underneath the need to have it ‘just’ your way? (e.g., vulnerability, not smart enough, not good enough, fear of _____ causing panic)

Find An Alternative Explanation

- Consider what the worst that could happen would be if you did not have control, and whether you could cope with it.
- More than one way to do things - multiple realities (“m”)
- It may not be about you ... what is the other person’s need? fear?
- If you gave this person the benefit of the doubt... what would it be?

For example:

When a persecutor invites you to join them as a persecutor, what could be a healthy response?

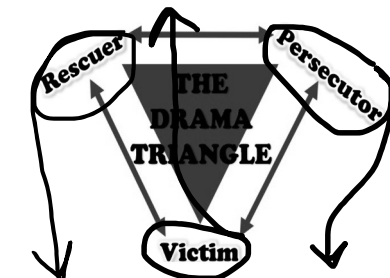
1. *Hey, did you see that movie last night? (a step back into distraction or ask about something that they can talk about related to power)*
2. *As you said that about that person, I found myself wondering what might be going on for that person?*
3. *What worries you if they do not do it your way? And, if those worries end up being true – would you be able to handle it? If you want... we could discuss what to do if the worse case does happen – I will be here for you.*
4. *If things are done differently and the end result is accomplished ... Will it be okay in the long run?*
5. *I hear you saying they did the task wrong, I wonder how you could help them save face so they could ?*
6. *Other*

For example:

- **Ask** “How can I be of help” **before** fixing.
- **Guide** – don’t do!
- Let others learn from trying & making mistakes to build tolerance for discomfort. It is ok for people to struggle - they need support NOT rescuing/fixing.



- Acknowledge the feeling AND still take action
- Reflect on strengths/resources when faced other 'hard' times



- **Ask** before fixing or giving advice
- Use a coach mindset

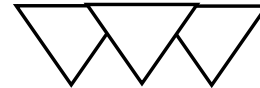
- Slow down - breathe
- Show empathy
- Explore more than one perspective
- Set a boundary

Drama Triangle (Karpman, 1968) modified by Dawn McBride

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ACTIVITY			
	VICTIM	PERSECUTOR	RESCUER
Healthier Things I can do when I recognize I am in each of these roles:	1. 2.	1. 2.	1. 2.
Healthier Things I can do when I am witnessing someone in one of these roles:	When someone is in this role, I can: 1. 2.	When someone is in this role, I can: 1. 2.	When someone is in this role, I can: 1. 2.

Want to learn more?



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