

Couple: how to get out of the victim, persecutor, and rescuer dynamic?

*“Anytime you have a negative, disheartening and frustrating relationship. Chances are you got drawn into a triangle game. "*

*Christelle Petitcollin - Victim, persecutor or rescuer: how to get out of the trap?*

During your discussions with your partner:

- do you feel like you got the opposite of what you wanted?

- do you feel like you've wasted your energy in an unsuccessful and irritating dialogue?

- do you end the discussion feeling like you've been fooled?

- is it always the same subject that comes up without being resolved at the end of the discussion?

If your answer is yes, chances are you are caught up in what is called a "mind game."

Have you ever heard of the Drama Triangle or Karpman Triangle?

It was Eric Berne, American psychiatrist, and founder of Transactional Analysis, who discovered and shed light on the existence of these mind games. It was then that Stephan Karpman who, thanks to the discoveries of Berne, brought to light what he would call the Drama Triangle. The Karpman triangle highlights a typical relational scenario between victim, persecutor, and rescuer. This is a psychological game between two people who will play the three roles alternately.



We are regularly trapped in this kind of negative exchange. It is very frustrating and it eats up a lot of energy.

So how do we get into this “game” and especially how do we get out of it?

This is what we invite you to discover in this video:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mGUkxUwwrgY&t=33s>

In the video we explain how you can avoid starting “a game".

Now let us take a look at the strategies to put in place and the traps to avoid so that you don't get dragged into a drama triangle in spite of yourself.

What to do if your partner takes on the role of the VICTIM?

The key word: resist doing things for them; your goal: for them to become autonomous, independent.

Here are some clues to help you spot the onset of the game:

- There is no clear request

- There is an escalation in the complaint, "*the world is against me*", "*nobody loves me*"

- Your partner doesn't seem to be looking for a solution.

Fishing phase? They will try to drag you into the "game" by pressing one of your weak points. The solution: know yourself well, be aware of your weak points to avoid falling into your usual patterns if they push your buttons.

- If you tend to take on the role of rescuer, tell yourself *"no I'm not going to do it for them, they have to find the solutions on their own.* "

- If you tend to take on the role of persecutor, tell yourself, "*No, I am not going to get upset and make it worse!"* I will motivate them to try for themselves.

- If you tend to take on the role of victim, tell yourself "*no, I refuse to fall into a competition of misfortunes.”*

I am a RESPONSIBLE adult who is talking to a RESPONSIBLE ADULT.

Clarify this request: "*What do you want from me*? "

What to do if your partner takes on the role of the RESCUER?

Resist the comfort of your partner doing things for you and see how they can help you learn.

Your goal: to learn from them and become independent

Here are some clues to help you spot the onset of the game:

- There was no clear request from you

- You feel that you will become indebted

- Help isn't really that effective, at the end of the day they don’t know any better than you.

When your partner engages in this behaviour, it is because they are seeking acknowledgement.

Fishing phase? The hook: your weak point. The solution: know them so you don't fall into your usual patterns when they push your buttons.

Here too, depending on your natural tendency to take on one of the roles, you can either:

- you let yourself be carried away by the generous offer at the risk of letting yourself become dependent

- refuse the intrusion and respond in a persecutory way

- start bidding, "*I know that you love this*" ...

Identify your typical scenarios, set your limits by refusing the assistance and the relationship of dependence. “*No, I won't let myself be infantilized, I want to become autonomous. No, I'm not going to get upset, I'm going to calmly set my limits*. "

The idea here is to refuse entering a relationship of power or dependence.

What to do if your partner takes on the role of the PERSECUTOR?

Your partner makes criticisms and insinuations or makes themselves feel better about themselves at your expense.

Here are some clues to help you spot the onset of the game:

- Criticism is not constructive, it attacks you personally

- You feel that they take pleasure in putting you down or you feel like you’re serving as a lightning rod for their frustrations which have nothing to do with you

- They appropriate your ideas, your rewarding projects.

Fishing phase? The hook: your weak point. The solution: know them so you don't fall into your usual patterns when they push your buttons.

Here too, depending on your natural tendency to take on one of the roles, you can either:

- let yourself be devalued: you take the role of victim by accepting criticism

- go into persecutor mode

- find excuses for them if you have a tendency to be a rescuer.

Identify your patterns and set your limits:

- “*No, I'm not going to let myself be crushed; I know my worth”*

- “*No, I’m not going to enter into a sterile conflict; I’ll calmly discuss the facts*”

- “*No, I refuse to apologize. They are responsible for the consequences of their actions*”

You understand now that this "game" is not played alone and if it has developed, it is because so far you have fed it without realizing it.

The good news is that now that you have realized your share of responsibility in this process. You can therefore put in place tactics to avoid falling automatically into this terribly frustrating, energy-consuming pattern that is the source of a lot of suffering for the relationship.

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Go further:

Discover the excellent book by Christelle Petitcollin, *Victime, bourreau ou sauveur : comment sortir du piège ?*- Editions Jouvence, in French.

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