Fear, Power and the Drama Triangle – and the Psychology of Calm

Fear results in fight, flight, or freeze. Fear disempowers, fear shuts down critical thinking. The result: we limit our choices, expect others to deliver solutions, and may enter the psychological role of ‘victim’. We give away our power.

In ‘victim’, we identify the ‘abuser/persecutor’ and look for a ‘rescuer/saviour’ – now we’re in the Drama Triangle. As victim, a child-like state, we can easily be persuaded against common sense or our own better judgment.

Once in the Drama Triangle, illness, death, pain, cancer or a virus may be seen as Persecutor, whilst Rescuers could be the NHS, new technology, ‘protection’ etc. We experience distress, blame, shame, frustration, helplessness, guilt, or fear. (Please note, we are talking about psychology – not about whether a specific solution is valid or not)

Even mainstream media indulge in this: ‘What do you most fear at the moment?’, ‘Who do you blame?’ ‘What worries you most?’. At times of national crisis, the NHS are seen as heroes (Rescuer role).

Actually, we’re people just doing our best. Yes, there are answers out there – but for you and I, minute to minute, Inner Calm is vital. From calm we access inner resources. From inner stillness, we ‘Now know what it is we need to do next’.

How do we escape the Drama Triangle? Stay calm – take a few moments to change your breathing – retrain to Parasympathetic stillness, away from sympathetic distress. Notice the Drama. Be True to Yourself, be authentic. Take back your power. Use your professional judgment wisely.

Use the Five Agreements: Be Impeccable with your Word (say what you mean, and no more), Take Nothing Personally (ouch!), Make No Assumptions, Just Do Your Best, and remain Sceptical about What’s Going on Behind What’s Going On. As we escape the Drama Triangle, we empower others.

Resources - Looking after your Professional Health Part 2 YouTube link: <https://youtu.be/l4Y14kc0E5Q> from 6.59 onwards. <https://www.somersetgpeducationtrust.co.uk/events>

For a longer discussion, see [www.healthandself.care](http://www.healthandself.care) The Drama Triangle pp71-77 where Dr Zoe Fox and I discuss issues, pp78-80 for Gill Edwards’ insights, and pp87-89 for the Five Agreements