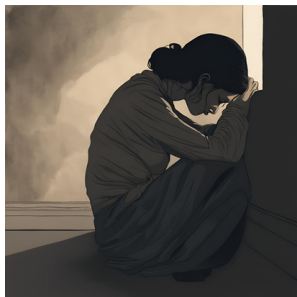


Drama Triangle

The Drama Triangle starts when someone takes on a role and initiates a scenario when the situation does not call for it. It can start with the Persecutor, Victim, or Rescuer.

PERSECUTOR

Blames, criticizes, or attacks others, creating a dynamic of power and control



VICTIM

Feels helpless, powerless, and often overwhelmed by life's challenges

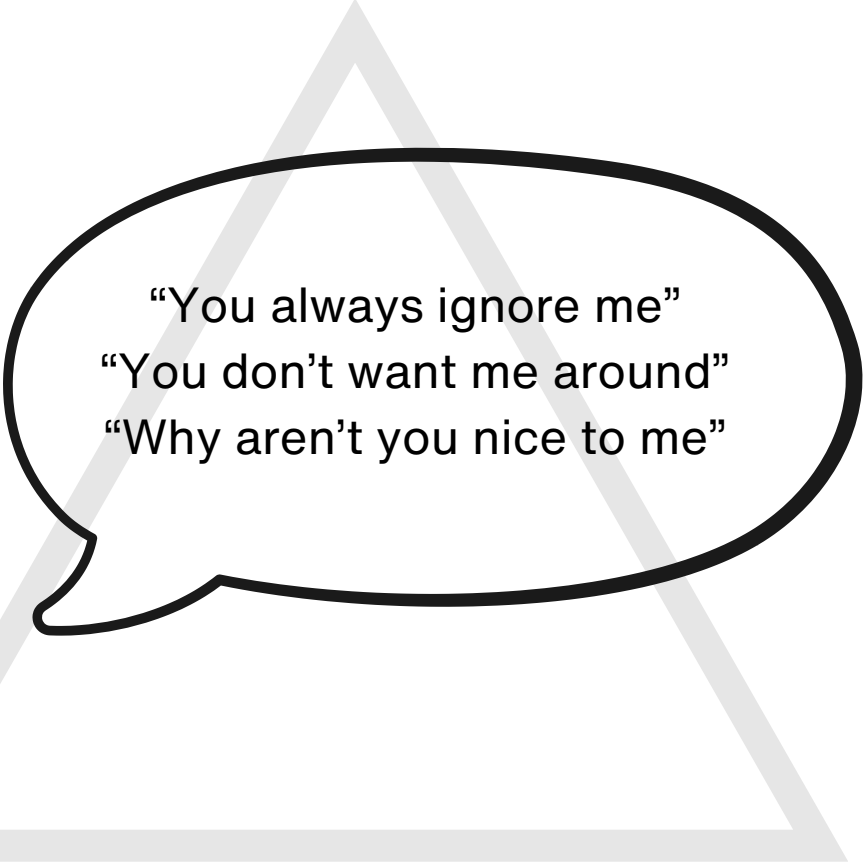


RESCUER

Steps in to "save" others, often without being asked, and takes on the problems of the victim

Drama Triangle - Persecutor/Victim

Someone plays the initiator. It's a way of dangling bait to try to "hook" a person into the drama triangle. The role tends to reflect an old wound from an unresolved trauma of the past.



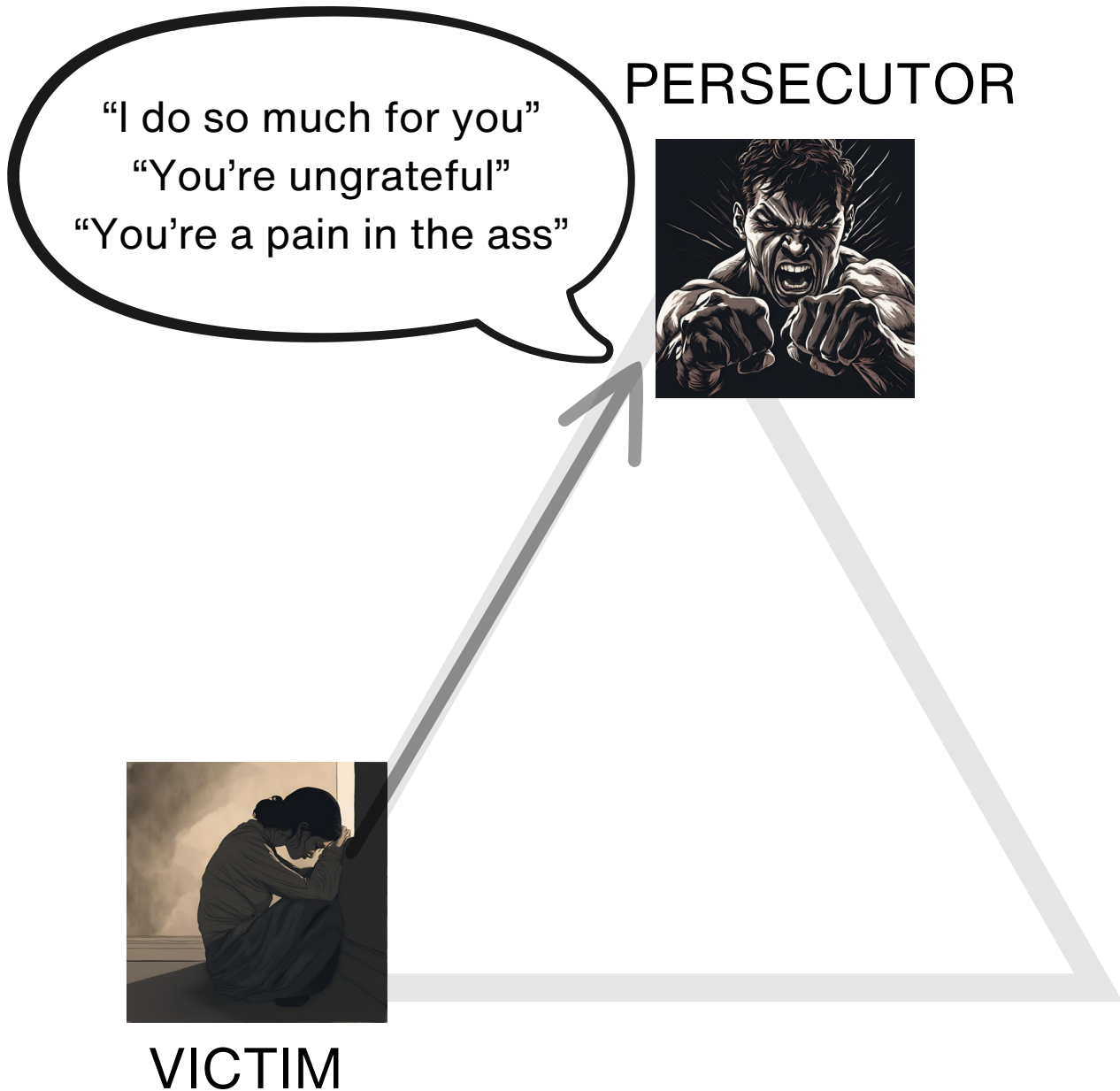
"You always ignore me"
"You don't want me around"
"Why aren't you nice to me"



VICTIM

Drama Triangle - Persecutor/Victim

The person becomes hooked, being “triggered” by the initiator. In this example the initiator is the Victim. The Persecutor reacts to the trigger.

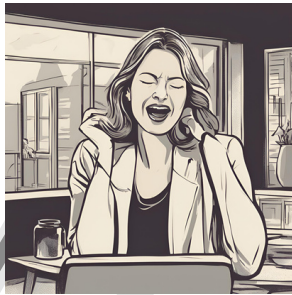


Drama Triangle - Persecutor/Victim

The roles change. The Persecutor becomes the Victim and the Victim becomes the Persecutor.

“You’re selfish.
You don’t do anything
for me.”
“This is your fault”

PERSECUTOR



VICTIM

Drama Triangle - Persecutor/Victim

The roles change. The Persecutor becomes the Victim and the Victim becomes the Persecutor.

PERSECUTOR



“I can’t do anything right”
“You blame me for everything”
“I’m trying but you don’t care”

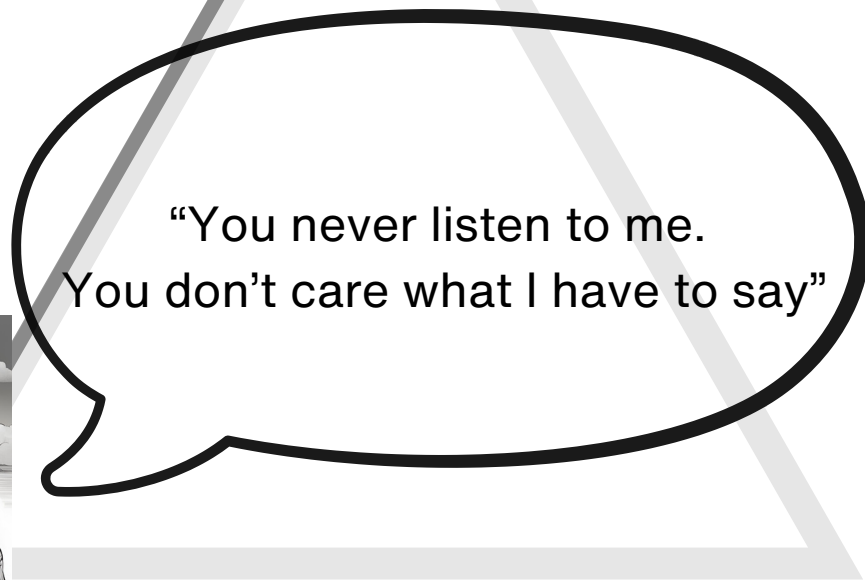
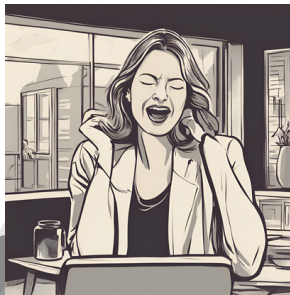


VICTIM

Drama Triangle - Persecutor/Victim

Usually people have certain roles that they play. Someone who might want to play the Persecutor can start off playing the Victim in order to hook the other person into the drama. For example, I might be angry at my partner because I feel like they never listen to me. I will start out as the victim.

PERSECUTOR



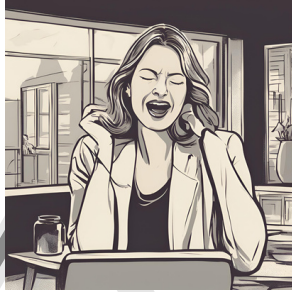
VICTIM

Drama Triangle - Persecutor/Victim

I have hooked my partner knowing how this can play out.

“Can’t you see I’m in the middle of something? What’s wrong with you?”

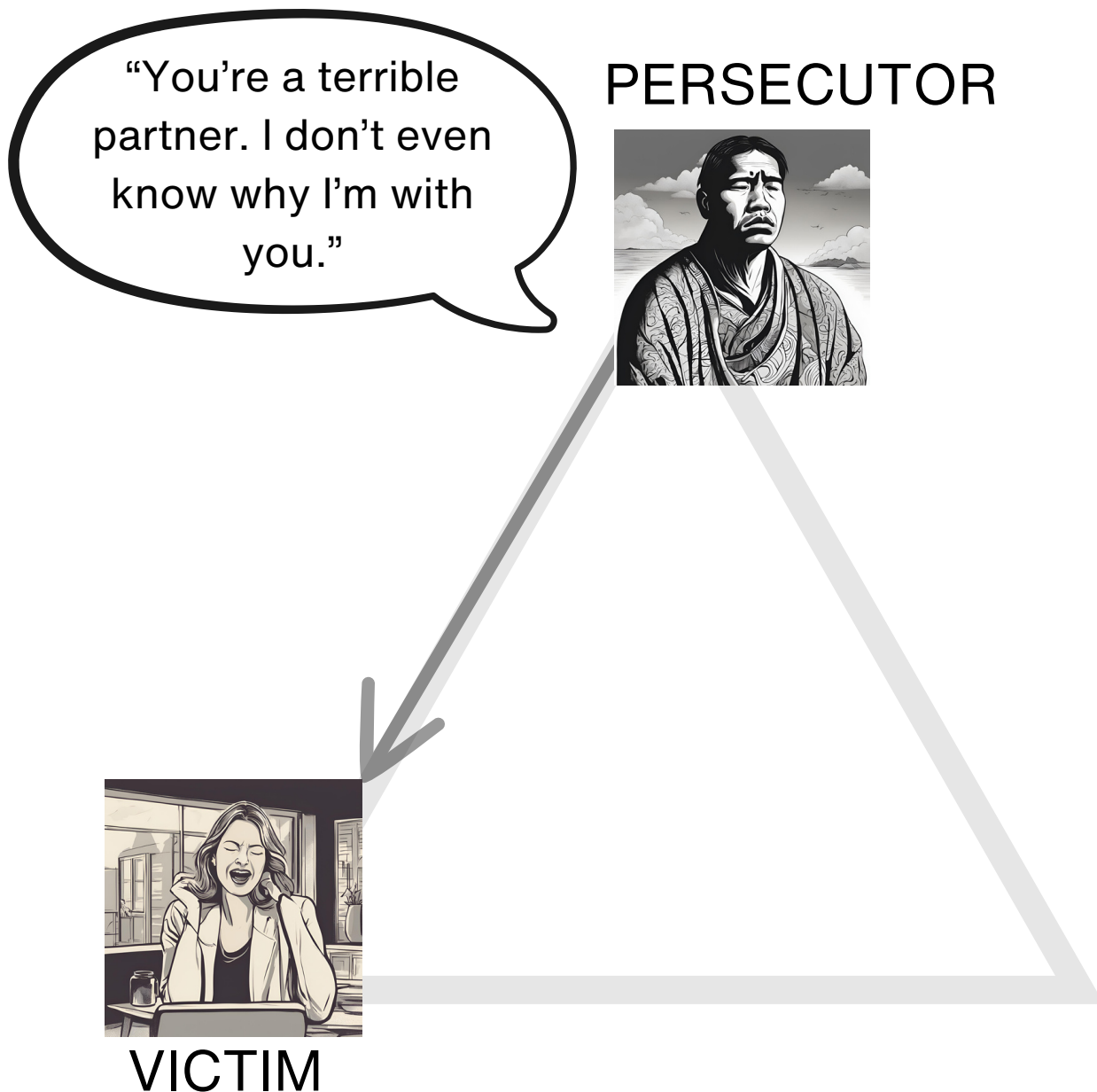
PERSECUTOR



VICTIM

Drama Triangle - Persecutor/Victim

Now I get to be the Persecutor and lash out at him. I also don't have to take responsibility for being the "mean one" in the relationship because I started out as the Victim and now as the Persecutor I get to defend myself. The cycle will continue to escalate towards a big fight.

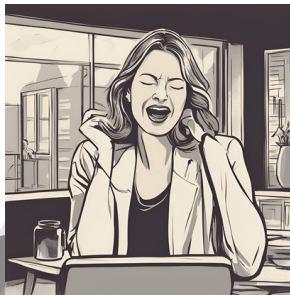


Drama Triangle - Persecutor/Victim

How can you get out of this cycle? When you “feel” like you are being attacked PAUSE and TAKE A BREATH.

My partner is upset.
Sounds like
he needs reassurance.

~~PERSECUTOR~~



RECEIVER

“You never listen to me.
You don’t care what I have to say”



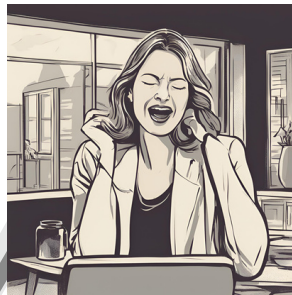
VICTIM

Drama Triangle - Persecutor/Victim

How can you get out of this cycle? When you “feel” like you are being attacked PAUSE and TAKE A BREATH.

“It sounds like you want to talk. I’m interested in what you have to say.”

~~PERSECUTOR~~



RECEIVER



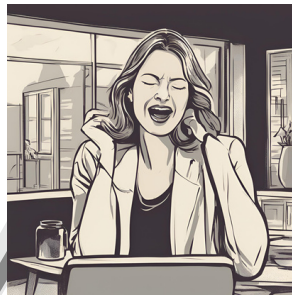
VICTIM

Drama Triangle - Persecutor/Victim

How can you get out of this cycle? When you “feel” like you are being attacked PAUSE and TAKE A BREATH.

“It sounds like you want to talk. I’m interested in what you have to say.”

~~PERSECUTOR~~



RECEIVER

“I guess I’m feeling lonely”



~~VICTIM~~

RECEIVER

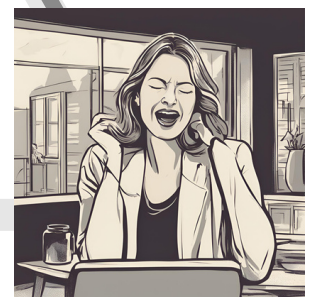
Drama Triangle - Persecutor/Rescuer

The rescuer's role is to step in and "save" others, feeling compelled to help even when not asked, believing their worth comes from fixing others' issues. Rescuers can become frustrated or burned out, feeling

PERSECUTOR



"Let me show you
how to do that"

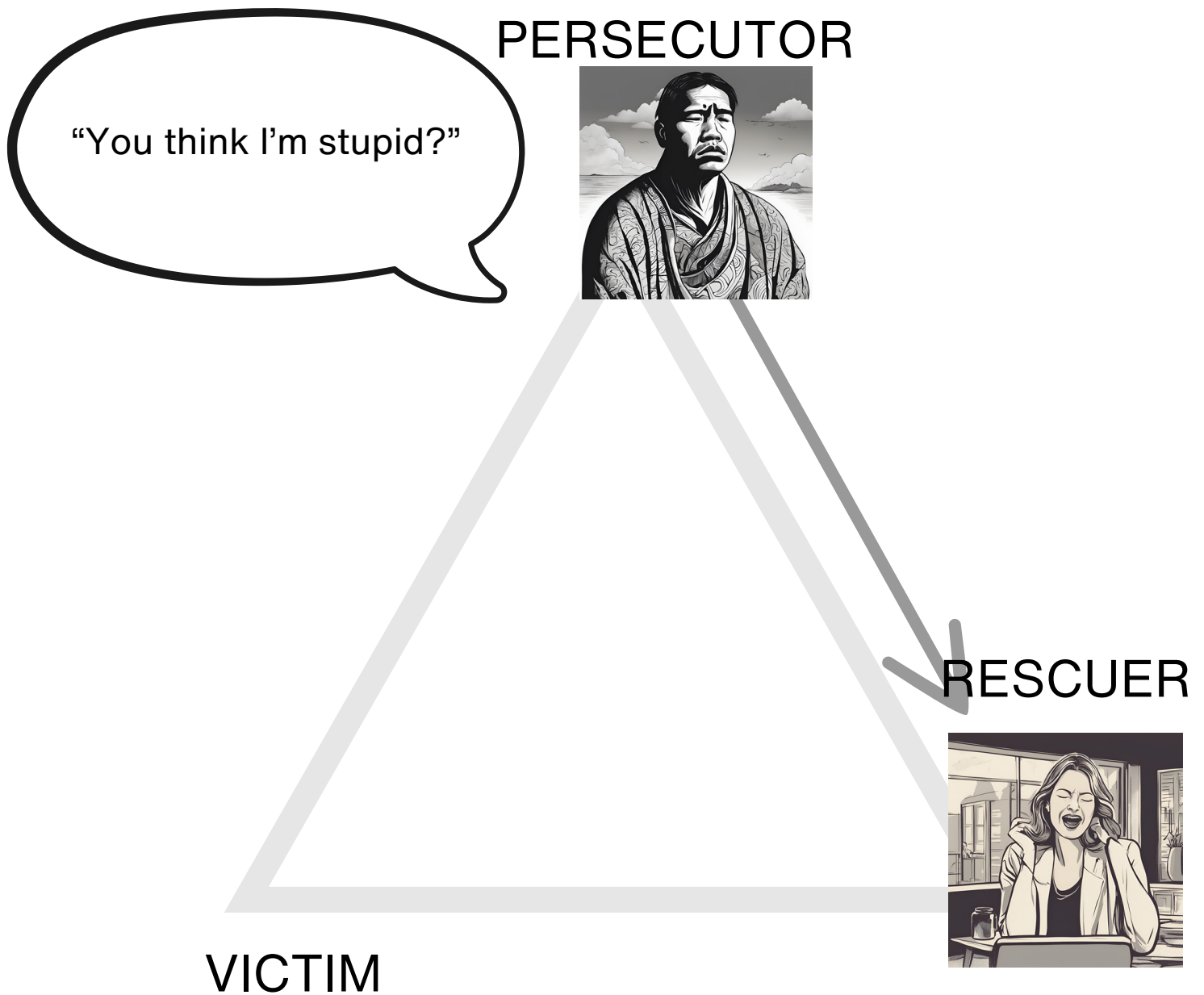


VICTIM

RESCUER

Drama Triangle - Persecutor/Rescuer

The Persecutor lashes out and gets defensive.



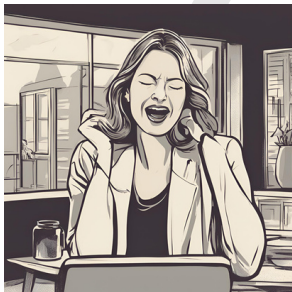
Drama Triangle - Persecutor/Rescuer

The Rescuer becomes the Victim.

PERSECUTOR

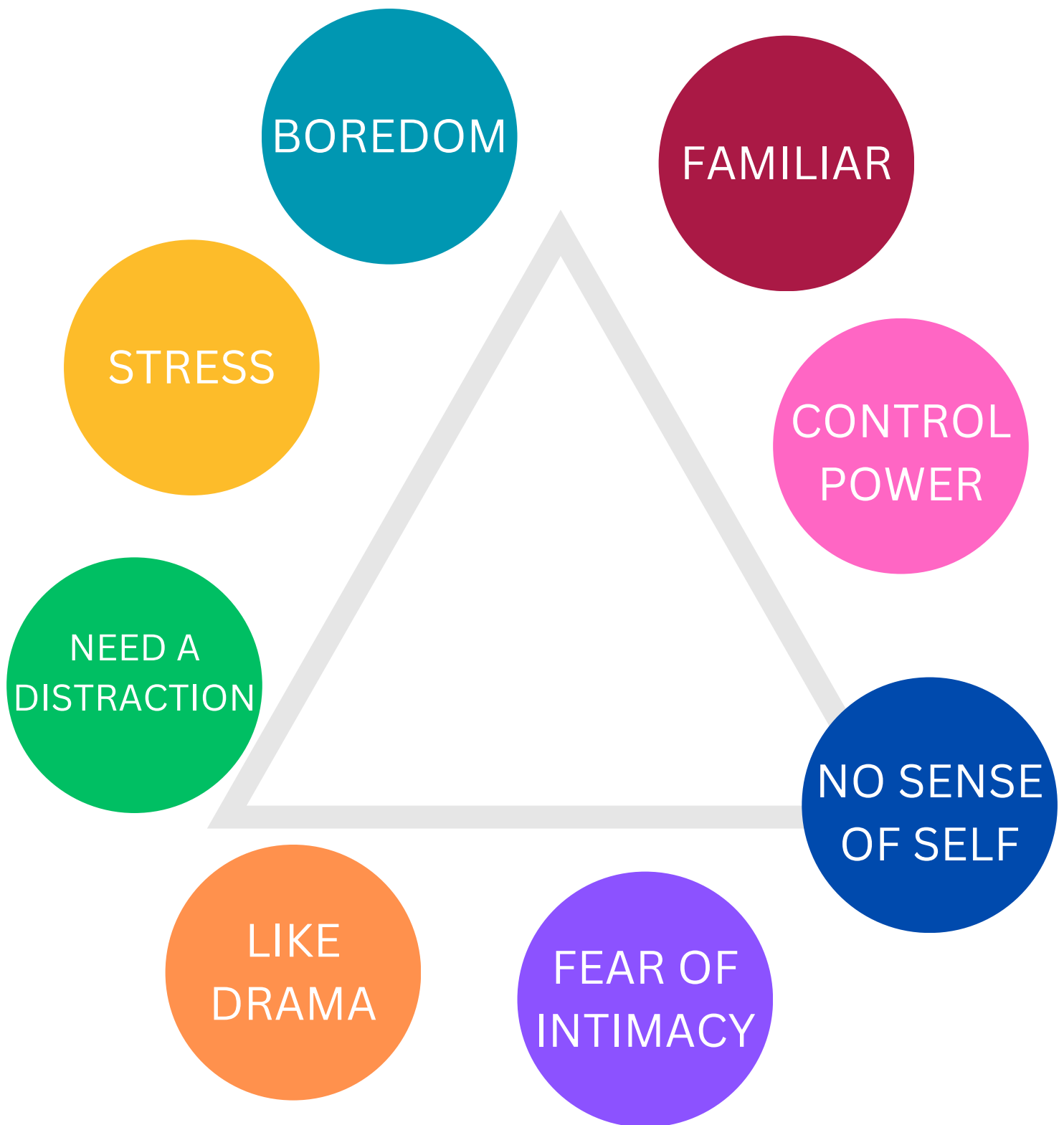


"I'm just trying to help.
You are so mean."



VICTIM

Drama Triangle - Why We Engage



Drama Triangle - Exercise

When you were young what roles did your parents, caregivers, teachers, mentors, bosses play?

P - "This is all your fault," or "Why can't you ever get it right?"

V - "Why does this always happen to me?" or "I can't do anything right."

R - "Let me handle this for you," or "I just want to help; you can't do it alone."

What did you learn about yourself as a result of these observed roles?

Drama Triangle - Exercise

When was the last time you played the role of P, V, or R? Notice the feelings in your body as you recount the situation.

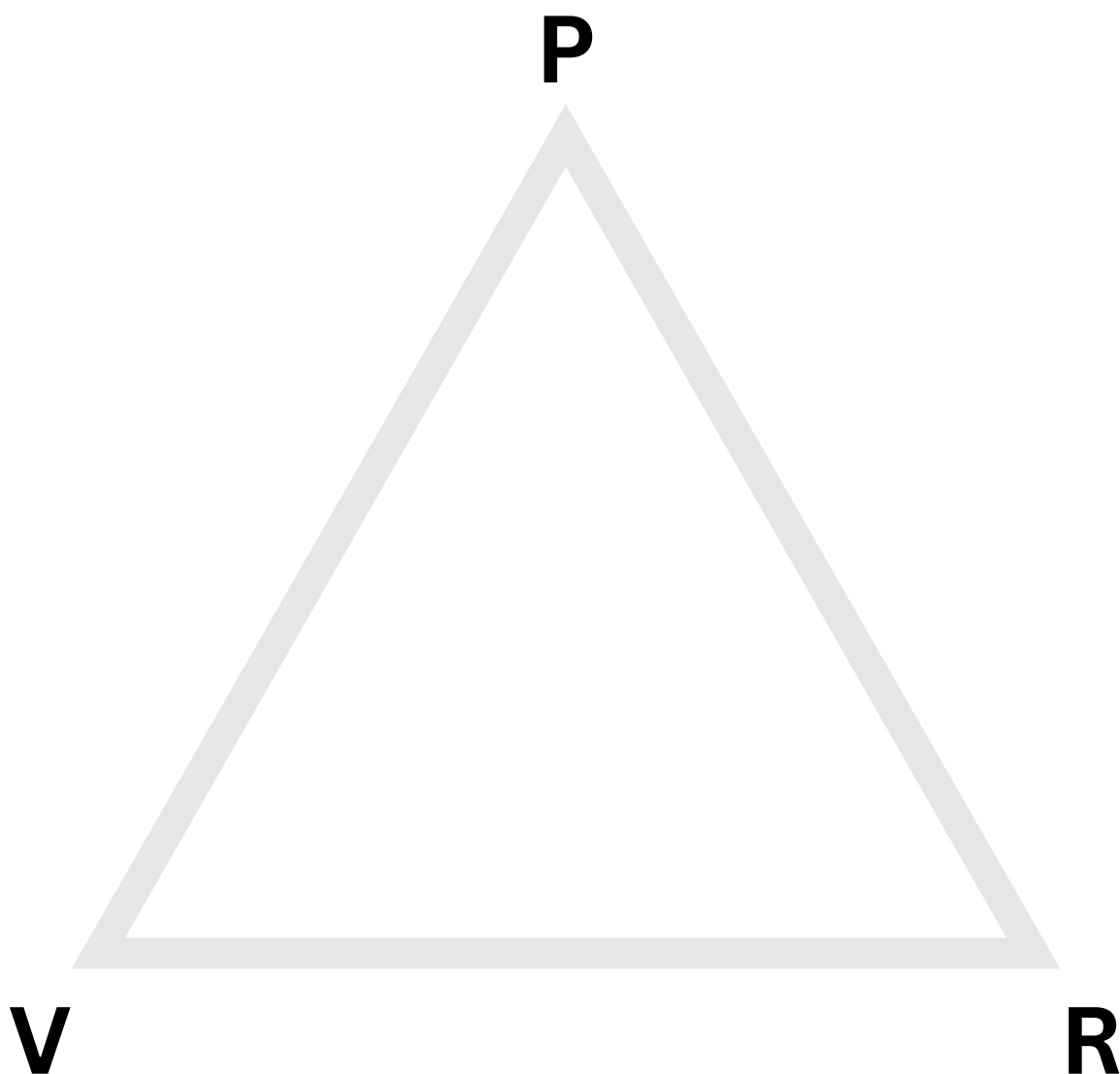
Were you the initiator or the hooked?

What was the situation?

What was said?

Drama Triangle - Exercise

Map out the scene below



Drama Triangle - Exercise

How do you know that someone is inviting you into the the drama triangle?

What do you notice in your body?

How can you disengage? What are ways that you can diffuse the situation?