

Syracuse Interim Comprehensive Plan

The Victim Trap

"The moment you blame anyone for anything, your relationship with reality ends."

The Concept

The Victim Trap is seductive. It offers a strange kind of comfort: if it's not your fault, you don't have to fix it. If you are powerless, you are safe from failure.

But the price of this safety is your freedom. You cannot be both a victim and a master of your own life. You must choose.

The Language of Powerlessness

Listen to the words you use. They reveal your mindset.

"I can't..."

"I won't..." (Honesty)

"I have to..."

"I choose to..." (Agency)

"They made me feel..."

"I reacted by feeling..." (Ownership)

The Drama Triangle

Stephen Karpman described the "Drama Triangle" where we rotate between three roles to avoid reality:

The Victim

"Poor me." Feels helpless, oppressed, and ashamed. Seeks a Rescuer.

The Rescuer

"Let me help you." Needs to be needed. Enables the Victim to stay stuck.

The Persecutor

"It's all your fault." Critical, controlling, and angry. Blames the Victim.

The only way to win is to step off the triangle entirely.

Deep Reflection

Escaping the Trap

Where do you play the Victim?

What area of life do you feel "done to" or powerless?

Translate "I Can't" to "I Won't"

Take a complaint (e.g., "I can't leave him") and change it to "I won't leave him because..." What is the honest reason?

The Turning Point

The Exit Strategy

What is one action you would take if you were the Hero of this story, not the Victim?

Syracuse Integrative Psychiatry

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