

BEYOND THE DRAMA TRIANGLE: THE OVERCOMING SELF

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Abstract

The article offers a comprehensive framework for analyzing and diagnosing the roles played in the Karpman drama triangle by using analysis of the states, behaviors, secondary gains, payoffs and marker words. The framework considers and describes specific instruments to step out of the script and possibilities of using those instruments in counseling. The author substantiates the potential of Overcoming Self, which is a particular formation within the Adult Ego-state that leads the subject towards an autonomous, realistic and responsible attitude to life and overcoming difficult life situations. The article demonstrates that in the process of communication all three roles are simultaneously played: while one of the roles is on stage, the other two thereafter; the main role gives way to one of the background roles. The foundation of the author's models of entering and exiting dependent relationships is Berne's theory of Transactional Analysis and V. Petrovskiy's multisubject approach. Both those theories help to demonstrate that one of the most important objectives for the counseling therapist is to reinforce and strengthen the client's Self through the client's undertaking of responsibility, for himself in the first place and thereafter for the lives of others (family, business and those surrounding him). The research demonstrates that in order to break the Gordian knot of the drama triangle, the counseling therapist needs to create such an environment, in which the client can reveal the inanity of script patterns and move from being dependent to forming, maintaining and relying on one's own self as an integral subject through strengthening of the Overcoming Self. Choosing a responsible attitude, the client takes over her behavior and gets the opportunity to see herself as the author of her life events.

Keywords: the drama triangle, the Overcoming Self, counseling, responsibility, difficult situations, coping, coping behavior, emotional "flutter".

When analyzing and examining the communication process one comes across its multilevel nature and diverse

vector directions. On the external level it is a general communication process, which combines all the possibilities of

verbal and nonverbal expression, while on the internal level it is the psychological component, which can combine many different (often contradictory) motivational tendencies. It is particularly keenly revealed in a therapeutic setting or a coaching session¹, where an entire theater of actions evolves with its director, multitude of actors and spectators. During counseling sessions subtle plotlines often surface, in which myriads of forms of transactions and their intertwinings unfold and detangle in the art of counseling relationship. Psychology considers many different ways of understanding and analyzing communication. This article centers on one of those internal psychological processes hidden behind the communication veil: the Karpman drama triangle (Karpman, 1968).

Although the Karpman model is highly popular in literature on practical psychology (Badkhen et al., 2006), it is mostly described in general terms. Most authors present only a short overview of the model, focusing on the moments in which switches between roles occur (for example, alone/social, near/far, open/closed (Berne, 1972)) and on the necessity to step out of the triangle. The wide use of the drama triangle is possibly due to the popularity of transactional analysis founded by E. Berne (Berne, 1961), the ideas of which underlie the model.

The model itself describes three habitual psychological roles, which people change depending on the situation:

– the role of the Victim, in which the performer projects the causes of

problems and sufferings onto other people, events and circumstances;

– the role of the Persecutor, in which one pressurizes, forces and persecutes the victim;

– the role of the Rescuer, in which one interferes out of a seeming willingness to help.

As S. Karpman demonstrates, being inside the triangle is the negative alternative of organising one's life. It leads to the reinforcement of possible tragic outcomes of dependent behavior. As mentioned above, available literature rarely offers a comprehensive description of the model. Even those available most often provide neither detailed analysis of vocal and behavioral indicators that characterize the roles nor the potentialities of a large number of techniques and communication approaches, which could allow stepping out of the drama triangle.

To fill this shortage, I focus my research on the possibility of highlighting key elements that allow to detect and comprehend how clients and counselors entangle within a scripted process and a means by which such communications lead the counseling process into a constructive mode. The general scheme of the setting is arranged so as to get the person out of roleplaying. However it is important to distinguish, examine and comprehend also the alternative to the drama triangle, and see what substance can be developed beyond the triangle, the substance being operationalized in this research via the *Overcoming Self* (Shmelev, 2011) the main characteristics of which are autonomy and a responsible and

¹ Hereafter counseling.

realistic approach to life. This will allow both beginning and practicing counselors to understand how the above mentioned trio of roles unfolds, to define its focal elements in order to be able to choose the most appropriate techniques for working with each specific case, and to build a possible algorithm for working with the client beyond the script of dependence by actualizing the Adult Ego-state. The abundance of literature on counseling and psychotherapy provides many descriptions of the role music of this trio with its flow onto the tragic requiem of consequences. What notes create this drama and how to pick up each role's music is the subject of this paper.

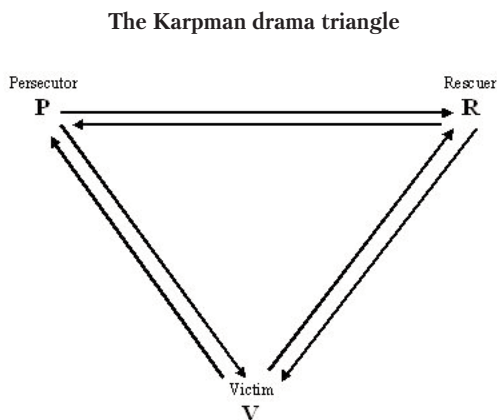
The main objectives of this research include: 1) for each role to distinguish the key indicator that would allow diagnosis of the role; 2) to analyze and describe the possible ways of stepping out of the Karpman drama triangle; 3) as an alternative to the drama triangle to substantiate the possibilities of strengthening the *Overcoming Self* in the Adult Ego-state. As basis for building the models I use E. Berne's theory

of transactional analysis and V. Petrovskiy's multisubject approach.

The drama triangle particularly acutely reveals itself in working with dependent (Moskalenko, 2014) and codependent (Emelyanova, 2004) people, and more broadly with any who externalize and transfers the causes of anything happening in their life onto external events, factors, people and circumstances; any who are accustomed to looking for justification for actions and consequences beyond their area of responsibility. As in any psychological script, here too one role switches to another, sets change, while at the heart remains an impressive tripartite Gordian knot of characters, dramatic for all involved.

The triangle is not a static but a variable formation of the communication process. It is like a molecule, atoms of which form specific connections thus allowing one not only to internally play those roles, but involve others within the triangle, cementing those relationships not just in the internal psychological space, but also externally in building relationships. Let us depict this diagrammatically (Figure 1).

Figure 1



In developing his model S. Karpman rested upon E. Berne's theory and devised the unfolding of a game, the whole drama of possible intertwinings and consequences of script patterns both in the client's life and in communication with the counselor. In constructing the model the author does not focus on detailed and in-depth analysis of each role, their internal causes and distinguishing vocal manifestations. In my research, to expand and supplement the author's conception, I identify indicators, which allow to examine specific characteristics of each position: the state and feelings one experiences, actions one takes while experiencing those

states and feelings, secondary gains one gets while playing a particular role, payoffs one has to pay for playing that role (consequences) and specific marker works. These indicators were identified based on the ego-states that Berne determined (Child, Adult, and Parent) (Berne, 2010). Each of those ego-states has its emotional, behavioral, mental and verbal manifestations (Stewart & Jones, 1987). The Adult Ego-state, as singled out by E. Berne, allows seeing the destructive script- and game-free personality in its autonomy, integrity and maturity.

Let us have a closer look at each of the Karpman drama triangle roles (Table 1).

Table 1

Victim

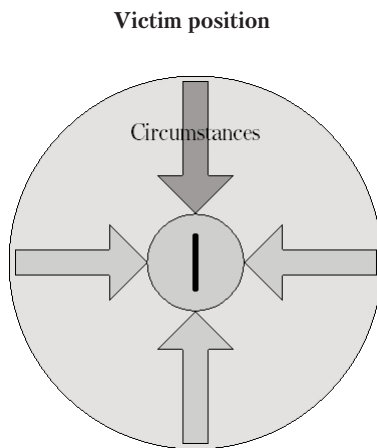
Feelings and states	Actions	Gains	Payoffs (consequences)	Words-markers
Pain Self pity Anxiety Hopelessness Fear Grief Sadness Guilt Anger Rage Aggression Envy Offence Irritation Disappointment Panic Apathy Rightfulness	Manipulation Acts of rightfulness Pitying Captation Attitudinizing Demonstration of weakness and self compassion	Attention from others Self justification Comfort Opportunity to be right (rightfulness) Absence of risk and responsibility Opportunity to suffer for rightfulness Self pity Masochistic pleasure from suffering Maintaining a negative world view	Health Relationship Time Self respect and respect from others Success Financial well-being Self esteem	"Nothing depends on me" "Problems" "Circumstances beyond my control" "I had to do so" "They make use of me" "It happened by itself" "It's not my fault" "I must / have to" "But I'm right!" Questions: "Who's fault is it?" "Why me?" "Why did it happen to me?"

Victims like to prove themselves right². Their communication style has a pronounced leitmotif: nothing depends on them, they are living a hard life filled with absence of happiness, suffering and tragic circumstances. To them a circumstance or a situation can be both an external factor, such as people and events, or an internal one, like illness, bad inheritances (genes), consequences of upbringing, absence of education, etc. From others they expect compassion. To get that compassion they have intricate and shrewd stories filled with myriads of illustrations of their profound unhappiness and hard life. Their focus of attention is in the past. The future is often thought of as difficult

and hopeless. Any interventions and actions of the counselor aimed at raising the client's awareness of his responsibility will be perceived by the Victim with resistance. As a result, client's preferred defense mechanisms and coping strategies will come on stage. He will play his victimhood in all its tragedy and yearning for compassion and counselor's advice. Schematically the Victim position can be described as follows (Figure 2): **Circumstances** will determine and predetermine the person's actions and prevail over the client's weak and vulnerable Self.

Victim's speech is rich with describing personal experience in terms of "problems". The plotline of their talk is

Figure 2



² Rightfulness — an aim that ensures steady direction of actions and gets expressed in the tendency to complete an action in any circumstances, thus leading at times to rigid behavior. Rightfulness is expressed as a consecutive system of stereotypical operations with use of habitual means. It includes: 1) a cognitive component (evaluation of the situation from the point of “this is the only right way”), 2) affective component (the emotional image of what is right), 3) behavioral component (habitual actions towards the object that is being evaluated). As an illustration of rightfulness one can refer to I. Krylov's fable *The Swan, the Pike and the Crab*, in which each of the characters hauls the load in his own direction without agreement and consideration of the common goal, thus upholding his or her own rightfulness.

filled with images of tragedies. Their perception is clouded with emotional experiences of hopelessness, disappointment, offence, sadness, etc. Their entire life is one big stage for **Suffering** and **Surviving** under the pressure of intolerable circumstances. As soon as the exterior and conditions change, for example, the interlocutor demonstrates some kind of weakness, a switch in the position takes place: a different role comes on stage (for example, the role of the Rescuer). Let us have a closer look at this role (Table 2).

A Rescuer is another side of the triad, which makes semblance in relationships, both with the counselor and others, of willingness to help and support. This role is very typical of people, who would like to cover their inner side, the role of the victim, with the *willingness to rescue*. They are *experts* practically in every area: they know how to build the *right* relationship, how to cure and provide psychological support in the *right way*, how to *rescue* vic-

tims in the right way, and how to live in the right way. It is important for them to demonstrate their *professionalism and expertise* in dealing with difficult situations. They are assertive and don't seek invitations when offering their help. A Rescuer needs to be aware of significant events in lives of other people.

Psychologically Rescuers live other people's lives. Their need to help others is rooted in their deeply injured personal autonomy. They depend on their role of a Rescuer and feel they are needed, useful and important only when they offer advice and "care". Often their behavior is extremely obsessive. Inquired or not, they can show or explain how to behave in a "right" way in one or another situation. A specific characteristic of their manifestations is the defense mechanism of denigrating. When a Rescuer changes her counselor she will be telling the new one how wrongly the setting was organized and how the prior specialist was not following her

Table 2

Rescuer				
Feelings and states	Actions	Gains	Payoffs (consequences)	Words-markers
Euphoria Self-significance and self-importance Power Excitement Omnipotence	Demonstration of compassion towards the victim Manipulation Obtrusiveness Advices Unsolicited help Doing the work on victim's part	Opportunity to be part of something "important" Self-expression Rightfulness Opportunity to escape own problem solving (there is a reason and a "good cause") Social acceptance High self-esteem.	Relationships Time Respect Success Financial well-being	"I know how to". "Let me give you an advice". "Do this way". "It didn't depend on you". Questions: "Who's fault is it?" "What to do?" "What is right?" / How to do right"

advice, thus switching from the role of a Rescuer to the role of a Victim or Persecutor. Let us look more closely at the role of the Persecutor (Table 3).

A Persecutor is full of resentment and “righteous” indignation. All his aspirations are aimed at punishing the victim. The Persecutor stands for truth and “justice”. Often such people are fanatical and prone to upholding ideas. The Persecutor lacks flexibility and the ability to view a situation from different perspectives. He is profoundly dependent on and attached to his limiting directives (e.g. “rightfulness”) and convictions. In a counseling session this role quite brightly manifests in the abundance of negative feelings and emotions towards people or situations.

All three roles base on a matryoshka principle: each role includes the other two. Just like clockwork under the influence of circumstances they wind each other up and alternate. E. Berne pointed out that there exist an *Executive* and a *Real Self*. V. Petrovskiy, in

his analysis of Karpman’s model, suggests that one triangle, played by the *Executive Self*, contains another triangle, which is played by the *Real Self* (Petrovskiy, 2006). Developing on that suggestion I hypothesize that the third role is implicitly present in the drama as well awaiting its part to come when the decorations change. While one of the roles enacts its character, the other two perform in the background creating the necessary space for the main role to actualize. Then the main role fades into the background and a new one comes on stage. Thus the counselor’s task is not only to diagnose the roles played, but also to track the conditions under which the switch from one position to the other occurs. It is important for the counselor to detect the trigger, the con (or cons) that launches the game.

What are the possibilities for the counselor not to step into a game and not to play the drama triangle together with the client? The answer lies in the

Table 3

Persecutor

Feelings and states	Actions	Gains	Payoffs (consequences)	Words-markers
Anger Irritation Rage Aggression Resentment Self-significance	Conflicts Aggressive actions Violence Harassment Persecution Criticism Accusation Cruelty Pressure Forcing	Power Omnipotence Upholding “justice” Rightfulness	Health Relationship Time Respect Success Financial well-being	“It’s your fault” “I’m right!” “I must uphold justice” “I will prove” “It is important to revenge” “It’s unfair” “I must / am obliged to punish (revenge)” Questions: to “How to prove him/her/they?”

essence of the triad, in which neither of the players takes responsibility and manipulatively abdicates it to others. It is responsibility that becomes in a way an indicator, which allows evaluating whether the person is inside or outside the script (Lister-Ford, 2002), how adequately she perceives reality and whether she uses manipulation to defend her point. Hence, the following common basis for all three roles can be distinguished: escaping responsibility, absence of contact with reality, manipulation, upholding one's rightfulness.

Once outside the drama triangle the counselor's objective is to strengthen and reinforce client's Adult Ego-state, which is identified and operationalized in this research via the *Overcoming Self*. The *Overcoming Self* is characterized by responsible and realistic approach to life and the ability to build profound dialogic relationships. The

reinforcement of the client's *Overcoming Self* can become a good basis and a possible indicator of an effective counseling process. Table 4 provides a more detailed view of the *Overcoming Self*.

One of the most important tasks of the counselor becomes the strengthening and reinforcement of the Self of the client via the client's undertaking of responsibility for his own self, his life and the situation in the first place, and then for the lives of others (family, business, people surrounding him). A psychotherapist or a coach needs to keep in mind that when the client becomes aware of her capabilities and inner strength of the Self, which stems out of personal authorship in the theater of life, it "brings the person back home to herself". As a result, the client takes control of her behavior and gets the opportunity to become the author

Table 4

Responsible and Overcoming Self

Feelings and states	Actions	Gains	Payoffs (consequences)	Words-markers
Joy Autonomy Ease Satisfaction Calmness Energy Pride Power Self-esteem Elation Optimism	Immediacy Support to others Planning and goal setting Looking into the future Accuracy of actions Prioritization Concentration Determination Flexibility Creative approach to decision making Timely execution of actions	Respect Relationship Time Money Trust Results New opportunities Influence Health Achieving own goals	Risk Misunderstanding Envy of others Condemns and reproaches Justifications Judgments by others	"Opportunities" "I can" "I am capable of" "Choice" "Responsibilities" "I will do" Questions: "What for?" "How?" "Why?"

and painter of her own life events and to organize life based on her own choices and decisions. A new context for many plots draws up, the personal potential for creation and co-creation gets unlocked, activity unfolds, thus allowing to direct that activity into fruitful practices and onto the achievement of set goals with use of all available resources, both external and those present in the client's psychological armory. The Self here appears not as a weak and suffering formation, but as a responsible and the *Overcoming Self*, which is capable of consciously unfolding its activity, making thought-out decisions and taking responsibility for own choices and acts.

With respect to events the *Overcoming Self* demands use of own efforts and in consort with them fulfills its capacities in overcoming difficult life situations. Meanwhile, it is important to mention that the client might feel fear, apprehension and anxiety with respect to his decisions and actions taken in the chain of events and there might be many negative shades in his inner dialog. He can under- or overestimate his abilities. However, "connectivity" with own decision, responsibility and focus on what is important for the person to create and achieve, becomes a keystone and a support in the subject's decision to surmount all internal and external attacks of emotional "flutter"³, take risks and achieve

what is truly important and a priority for him. Here the Self becomes a "capacity of its own self" (Starovoitenko, 2013), a source for choosing actions aimed at resolving difficulties. It is important to note that client's activity in such a plot can unfold both inside the logic of the problem situation and beyond that logic (in the metalogic, i.e. taking into consideration that the situation is part of a broader context, to solve the problem one needs to proceed to a metaposition and rise above the situation), and its vector is directed at solutions, which are dictated by the goals of the subject. Schematically described, the process would pass the following stages:

1. Taking the situation as it is.
 2. Selecting a goal (visualizing the "image of what is possible as a prototype of the real" (Petrovskiy, 2010)), out of all possibilities (internal and external) choosing new ways of acting in the situation, making decisions and taking responsibility to fulfill those actions.
 3. Proceeding to taking the devoted actions and risk (for further details see V. Petrovskiy's *A Model for Ascending Risk* (Petrovskiy, 2010)). It is important to note here that the goal lies beyond the problem situation. Achieving it requires the person to get out of the comfort zone of her Self and step into the risk zone (emotional "flutter").
- A case in family counseling can illustrate the process. For example, a

³ Flutter is a strong oscillation of the aircraft as it reaches certain critical speed at which the center of flexure and the center of pressure do not concur. For a long time the supersonic barrier could not be broken due to flutter. Nevertheless, it was successfully broken in 1947 by Chuck Yeager, a courageous pilot who increased the speed of the aircraft at a speed at which his predecessors would drop it. As he passed through flutter and broke the supersonic he found himself in silence and enjoyed his victory and the pleasure of flying.

woman is telling about her conflict with her husband. If the counselor makes long inquiries into the essence of the conflict, with detailed analysis of all the nuances of feelings and experiences with that regard, it can lead to further frustration and escalate the conflict. Certainly, the woman will share her sufferings and play the drama triangle by all means. As a possible response the counselor can ask what is important for the client to create with her husband, and what new relationship she would like to build. In that case the focus shifts from the problem situation to possible solutions, which lie beyond that situation. As the woman speaks of how she sees new relations, there emerges space to step outside the borders of the problem and move towards the desired outcome. The situation itself becomes a challenge for the client, to meet which she needs to go through an emotional “flutter” beyond which opportunities for reaching her goal open up. To expand this idea further reference to V. Petrovskiy’s, *The Principle of Supra Situational Activity* needs to be made. “According to this principle, as the subject takes action towards realizing the initial relationships of his activities, he steps outside the borders of those relationships and eventually transforms them. Taking action above the threshold of situational necessity presents the initial characteristic of activity as a moment of progressive movement.” (Petrovskiy, 2010). “The person steps beyond the requirements of the situation, demonstrating supra situational activity. In other words, he acts *above the threshold of situational activity*.” (Petrovskiy, 2010). In this case the subject gets the opportunity to expand and reinforce her Self

by incorporating the emerged potential of achievements into the structure of her experience and injecting the newly opened possibilities and resources into the tissue of her own Self. The person discovers a new world of possibilities via her own activities and actions (Petrovskiy, 2010).

It is important to underline, that the subject’s aspiration for risk in supra situational activity is “unselfish” and “valuable by itself”, that is risk attracts the person without assuming any particular final goal. In the counseling process it creates a powerful resource, which allows launching the subject’s activity aimed at changing the situation. A psychotherapist or a coach can ask the following questions: “In that situation what is challenging or of risk to you?”, “What will happen if you take the risk in that situation?”, “What could be the value of risk in that situation?”, “What opportunities does risk create for you?”. The principle of supra situational activity allows the client to accept the possibility of an indeterminate outcome (Petrovskiy, 2010).

Human tendency to take risk and establishing conscious goals in the process of the setting create a new context that makes the client’s life more dynamic. He discovers the possibility of living and experiencing change, thus he takes control of himself.

In other words, the difficult life situation itself and the possibility to go beyond it with help of supra situational activity become the resource to unfold the *Overcoming Self*. Setting a conscious goal with counselor’s support directs development.

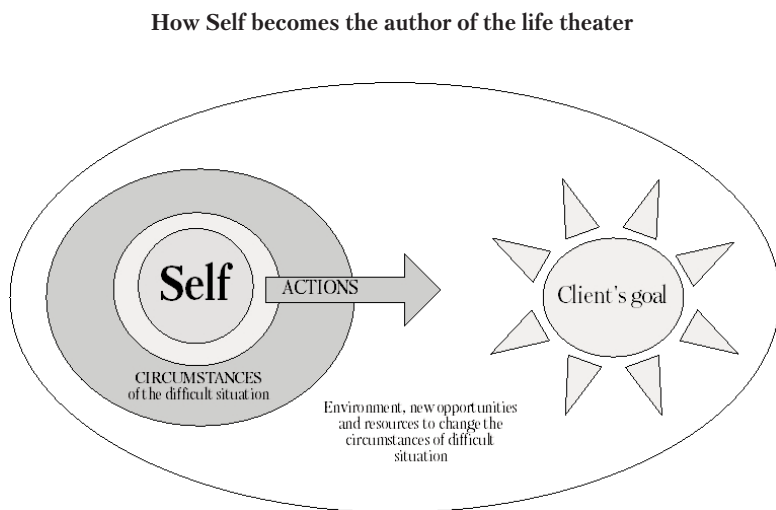
In terms of surmounting difficult life situations, the *Overcoming Self* presents a particular form of coping:

proactive coping. The essence of proactive coping is that it develops before one gets into a difficult situation. Basic coping, which is a *reactive coping*, is used to restore balance during or after something has already happened. *Proactive coping* gets actualized when the difficult situation becomes only one of the preparatory phases to achieve future goals (Aspinwall, Taylor, 1997). According to empirical data, proactive coping is tightly connected with the same personality characteristics as those present in one's notion of the future: advanced self-control and high self-esteem. One of the main sources of proactive coping is the person's emotional and axiological approach to difficulties in life, characterized by a directive that difficulties are challenges, and one becomes stronger by overcoming them. Such people generally take all events and situations optimistically (Belinskaya, 2009).

Figure 3 schematically shows the concept in which Self becomes the author of the life theater.

When the therapist or coach shifts the focus of attention to what could lie in client's area of responsibility, she creates room for the Adult Ego-state to take charge (because the Child is not yet able to take responsibility: in Child Ego-state actions are dictated by parents. The Child then interiorizes and folds the external parent into an inner plan. The Adult is capable of being responsible for himself, while the Parent can take responsibility for others as well.) The Adult concentrates on searching for new opportunities and gaining personal strengths and resources, which gets actualized in achieving goals. The Adult focuses not on emotions and his righteousness, but on the perception of the current situation, on sourcing objective information and on his own goals. The Adult is organised and knowledgeable, he acts as he examines the reality, evaluates his capabilities and analyzes the possible outcomes of his decisions and actions. Here the degree and level of individual involvement, and the client's evaluation

Figure 3



of inner and outer potential, become the other way round. This scheme works also the other way around: if the person has no picture of his final goal and his actions are probationary or abrupt, he wastes energy and exhausts his inner resources. To avoid it, transactional analysis and coaching have developed the contractual method, which allows the counselor to identify and apprehend inquiries. A lot of attention is driven towards setting clearly-stated goals, wishes and expectations with the client, because at this stage both parties have the opportunity to understand the vector and direction of the counseling process (Stuart & Jones, 1987).

Of course, degrees of manifestation of the drama triangle differ and individual characteristics of each client will find their way in the script pattern. Thus apprehension of own responsibility and the degree to which each client takes it will be expressed differently. It is important for the counselor to be sensible and ecological towards the client: she needs to understand how much the client is ready to benefit from the counseling process.

The table below summarizes and shows the features of each of the above mentioned positions. It is important to highlight that my aim was not to describe each position's features in full detail. My goal was to pinpoint those characteristics, which would help to describe the traits inherent in a role. In counseling practice it allows the identification of the client's position based on the manifestations of those characteristics, and if needed, to place new emphasis (Table 5).

A question arises. How is it technically possible to create such conditions

so that the client's Adult Ego-state gets activated and takes responsibility, choosing the position of the *Overcoming Self*? Apparently a personality dependent on role-play will negatively react to any interventions of the counselor and will consciously or subconsciously display a broad variety of his manipulative skills. To create the above mentioned conditions there are number of modes of communication, part of which are presented below.

1. It is important to stimulate the client to think by himself about the possibilities he has (although he might not picture those possibilities yet), by asking questions like "What possibilities do (did) you have to come out of that situation? You have most probably thought of some of them, and even maybe have already done something?"

2. To ask a refining question to one of the client's keywords. For example, the client says, "Only you can help me with this problem. If you don't help me, I'm dead!" The counselor can ask a question and specify how exactly she can help him.

3. Transferring responsibility: "In this situation what are you ready to take responsibility for?", "In this situation, what is under your responsibility?"

4. A coaching method, in which the question addresses the future of the client: the expected results and goals of the counseling process or what is important for the client to create in communication with others or in relation to something (for example, in relation to his illnesses): "What would you like to get as an outcome?", "What result is important for you to achieve?", "What is your goal?"

5. Focusing on the difficulty: "What could be of value in that you take the

Table 5

The features of different positions

Responsible position of Overcoming Self	Position of the Karpman drama triangle script pattern
There are always possibilities.	There are no possibilities.
The person is guided by actions that are based on goals, fulfilling own decisions and promises.	The person is guided by judgments, opinions, feelings, appraisals (like-don't like), hopes and wishes.
The Self expresses and manifests itself in results and products of activity: I find solutions.	The Self expresses and manifests itself in justifications, storytelling (why something can't or didn't happen): I find justifications and problems.
What decisions do I make with regard to my life? What are my goals? What can I do? Why? What for?	What is wrong with me? What is wrong with others? Who's fault is it? Who will "save" me?
I am my word (I think = I say = I do).	I am my feelings, and my inactivity depends on my negative feelings.
Choices and decisions.	Inevitability and compromise.
I know for what purpose and goal I am doing it.	I am a victim of circumstances; other people make use of me.
My efficiency and productivity are an intendedly created outcome.	Circumstances worked out in favor or against.
Responsibility rests with me.	Responsibility rests with others.
It is important to support other people.	People are means to achieving my goals.
Investment into others, heritage, society.	Consumption at the expense of society and others.
Flexibility in ways to achieve results.	Rigidity in ways to achieve results.
Involvement in communication.	Manipulations in communication.

risk and take responsibility for this situation?"

6. Express the need for clarification: "I do not understand what you mean." This method allows the client to search for new ways to formulate what he wants to say, based on which the counselor can bring the client out of the triangle by transferring responsibility to her.

7. Awareness: "What are you doing right now?", "What is happening between us in our communication right

now?" The counselor investigates from a metaposition how the client plays the drama triangle here and now and relates it to the client's life, examining similar manifestations in different situational contexts. The counselor and the client consider the consequences such behavior can lead to and discuss what the client is ready to take responsibility for.

8. Breaking stereotypes: "That is not what you wanted to say."

9. Commenting: “That is an interesting point of view.”, “Interesting point of view.”

10. Reframing: “The question is not that..., but that...”

11. Appealing to the value of what the client said: “It seems it was important for you to tell me that.”

12. A Gestalt therapy method: “Stay with what you said.”, “How does what you say now relate to your life?”, “How one can relate what you say to areas of your life? How does it manifest within the family, at work and among-friends...?”

13. Encodement⁴ as one of the best antithesis to games: “Please rephrase. It is important for me...”, “At times the hunter and the prey switch...”, “How about bringing it to the open?”, “Who am I to you in that situation?” (Petrovskiy, 2011).

This list is not exhaustive. However it can become a good foundation for a practicing counselor. The important thing here is not so much the technical arsenal as the ability to get to the essence of a client’s problems, intentions and goals. The Gordian knots of the drama triangle can be broken by creating an environment, in which the client can reveal the inanity of script patterns, and then acquire her Self as a “cause in itself” (Petrovskiy, 2013), proceed from dependency to evolution, existence and reliance on herself as an integral subject.

For the client it is important to see, that thanks to his own subject activity he gets the opportunity not to depend

on others but to build relationships which allow him to *find himself in his own reflections* (Petrovskiy, 2010). The counseling environment needs to become a place for the client to treasure his “autonomous causality”, i.e. Self as a “cause of itself”, where the “Self of the individual is regarded as a subjective form of the equality of the reflexive and the reflected (Petrovskiy, 2010). It is a context, in which the person opens up new opportunities “to preserve himself, which develop through responsibility towards others, fulfilling obligations, promises and duties, words, apprehension of effectiveness and productivity of life, presence as a sustainable “significance” in other people, stories about own self and images-self portraits, symbolic comprehension and picturing of own self” (Starovoytenko, 2013). It is a place, in which client’s uniqueness can evolve. Uniqueness, which offers fertile grounds to germinate his personality growth, self-efficiency, authenticity and autonomy, free in its creative manifestations and self-awareness, which is expressed in spontaneity, autonomy, integrity, genuineness (when one thinks, tells and does the same thing) and sincerity in relationship to one’s self and with others, and the adoption of a responsible attitude to life and an approach to dialogue with the Other, with communications which develop, and this reinforces and expands the depth and breadth of the Self.

In summary, unfolding the dynamics of working with the Karpman drama triangle, the article reviewed the roles

⁴ Encodements (Engl. *encode* – convert into a coded form) are “Ambiguous phrases, words and expressions, which can be used as an answer practically to any remarks made by the interlocutor. Encodements allow to turn a conversation into a fascinating game.” (Petrovskiy, 2011).

played in it and demonstrated that each role has its peculiarities and together they form the specific melody of a dependent trio. The connecting thread for those relationships is the deep trauma of personality autonomy and inability of the subject to “summon himself around himself”. The main objective for the counselor to assist for the client to become clear and aware of his intentions and goals, and to gain new resources in life via specific actions and achievement of results. It is especially important to draw the client’s attention towards the potential of opportunities, which lie outside the boundaries of the difficult life situation. The client’s task is to unfold the space of his Self towards building autonomous and Overcoming Self relationships, which would allow him to gain personal autonomy through taking responsibility for his own destiny, to make decisions to fulfill obligations and to accept the fact that he is the author

of the story of his life. The goals and steps to achieve them will be specific to each client. It is important for the client to see and apprehend his own “flutters” and to create the new boundaries of his Self. It will allow strengthening the Adult Ego-state, to increase its potential and to develop and reinforce the *Overcoming Self*.

When the focus of attention in the counseling process is not on the problems and difficulties experienced by the client, but on the supra situational activity of the subject as a “carrier of possibilities that are outwardly justifiable”, then the client opens up a new space in which he gets self-reliability that is actualized via his own internal resources — responsible choices and decisions. “The subject of self-reliability feels the possibility itself to objectify his capabilities” (Petrovskiy, 2013) by writing his own autonomous life script. With support from the counselor the client becomes the director of his own performance entitled, *My Life*.

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За пределами «драматического треугольника»: Овладевающее Я

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Резюме

В статье предлагается развернутое описание модели анализа и диагностики ролей «драматического треугольника» С. Карпмана с помощью анализа состояний, действий, вторичных выгод, цены, которую приходится «платить», и слов-маркеров; рассматриваются и описываются конкретные инструменты выхода за пределы сценария и возможности их применения в консультативной практике; обосновывается потенциал овладевающего Я как особого образования в эго-состоянии Взрослого, которое ведет к автономному, реалистичному и ответственному отношению к жизни и преодолению трудных жизненных ситуаций. В работе показывается, что все три роли присутствуют в процессе общения одновременно: пока на сцене одна фигура, две оставшиеся выступают фоном, после чего она уступает

место другой. За основание построения моделей вплетения в зависимые формы отношений и выхода из них автором взяты теория транзактного анализа Э. Берна и мультисубъектный подход В.А. Петровского, позволяющие показать, что одной из важнейших задач консультанта становится укрепление и усиление Я клиента за счет взятия им ответственности сначала за себя, свою жизнь и трудную жизненную ситуацию, затем за жизни других (в семье, в бизнесе и за свое окружение). В работе показывается, что разбить гордиев узел «драматического треугольника» возможно тогда, когда консультантом создана среда, позволяющая открыть клиенту всю бессмысленность сценарного паттерна и посредством усиления своего овладевающего Я перейти от зависимости к становлению, существованию и полаганию себя как целостного субъекта. Выбирая ответственную позицию, консультируемый овладевает своим поведением, получает возможность отнестись к событиям своей жизни как автор.

Ключевые слова: «драматический треугольник», овладевающее Я, консультация, ответственность, копинг, трудная жизненная ситуация, совладание, совладающее поведение, эмоциональный «флаттер».