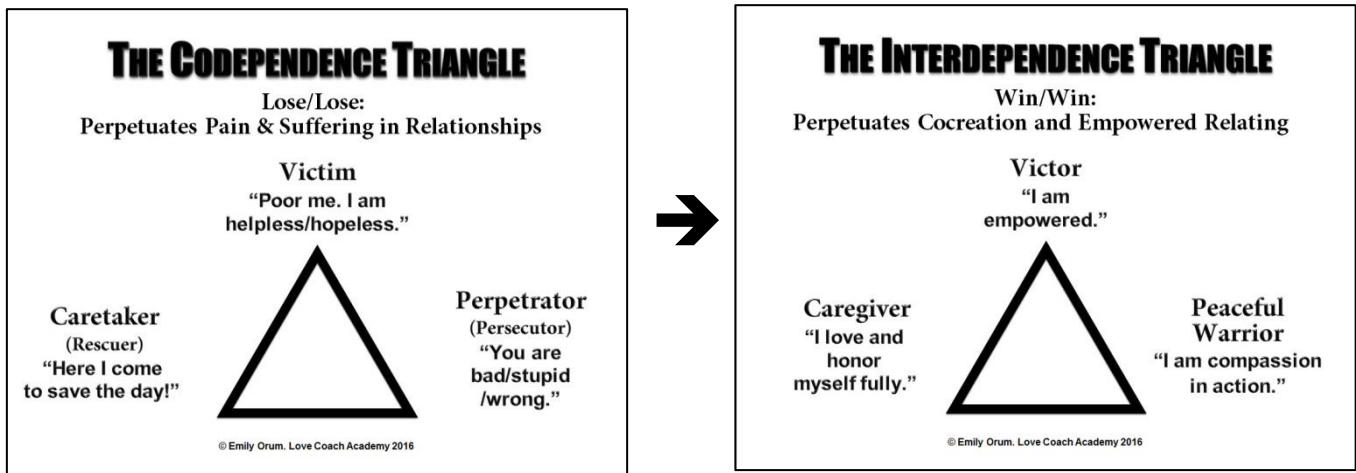


# From Codependence to Interdependence: Reframing the Victim Triangle



## 1. THE PATTERN: CODEPENDENCE

### **VICTIM: "Poor me."**

- Feels helpless, hopeless, powerless, and ashamed. Identifies with a narrative of being victimized and oppressed.
- Looks for a rescuer/caretaker who will perpetuate his uncomfortable feelings about himself and the world.
- If he stays in the victim role, he blocks himself from making decisions, solving problems, or getting his needs met in a life-affirming way, and he will look to others to take care of him.

### **CARETAKER (RESCUER): "Here I come to save the day!"**

- Believes his value (currency) lies in rescuing and/or caretaking.
- Keeps the victim dependent by continually taking care of him, implying that the victim can't take care of himself.

### **PERPETRATOR (PERSECUTOR): "You are bad/stupid/wrong."**

- Also feels victimized and lashes out. Plays the blame/shame game. Attracted to people who play victim.
- Is mobilized by anger and control, and uses demands to try to get his needs met.

## **2. THE TRANSFORMATION: INTERDEPENDENCE**

### **VICTIM → VICTOR**

#### **VICTOR: “I am empowered.”**

- Knows that he has choice.
- Is empowered. His feelings and needs matter, and he can take care of himself.
- Makes choices that serve his highest good.
- Expresses his feelings and needs powerfully and vulnerably.
- Asks for help when he needs it.
- His happiness and well-being are up to him, and not dependent on someone else or external circumstances.

#### **Reflect:**

- What feelings and needs are important to me, and what strategies can I create to get them met?
- Where and to whom am I giving away my power? When and why?
- How can I reframe my choices to be empowered?
- How can I best identify my needs and appropriate boundaries for requesting support?

### **CARETAKER → CAREGIVER**

#### **CAREGIVER: “I love and honor myself fully.”**

- Cares about you, but not at his own expense.
- Gives from his 100% YES and not out of guilt, fear, obligation, or an attempt to prove himself.
- Gives from a full cup. His gift to you is from his overflow.

#### **Reflect:**

- What values am I trying to meet by what I want to offer?
- Has the other person specifically requested my support?
- If they haven't asked for my help, why do I believe I must involve myself?
- Is what I have to give in the highest good of all involved?
- When I feel the impulse to help or rescue, can I slow down and reflect upon the needs and boundaries of all concerned?

### **PERPETRATOR → PEACEFUL WARRIOR**

#### **PEACEFUL WARRIOR: “I am compassion in action.”**

- Gets his needs met with honesty and vulnerability.
- Courageously chooses compassion and love.
- Honors and respect the feelings and needs of all concerned.

#### **Reflect:**

- What are the unmet needs underneath my discomfort?
- What pain, fear, or anger is calling for my compassion and care?
- How can I vulnerably ask for what I need, rather than resorting to manipulative behaviors (e.g., demanding, grasping, punishing, guilt-tripping, withdrawing love, etc.)?
- What needs or values are important to me, and what (spoken or unspoken) boundaries have been crossed?
- How can I get my needs met in a way that honors all involved?
- When I feel hurt, anger, or pain, am I willing to be vulnerable and let the other person know what's going on inside of me?