



The Rescue Triangle

J. P. Hoogma and Tinklin, T., **The Rescue Triangle**. Edinburgh: CornuCopia Publications, 2000.

or the art of being in charge of yourself and not controlling other people.

As we grow up, we naturally learn ways of controlling our environment. This includes developing patterns of behaviour that we use to control the behaviour of other people. This is not a negative process - all our patterns were developed for a positive reason, perhaps to protect us from something or to allow us to survive a particular situation. Often, however, people keep on behaving in these patterned ways when it is no longer constructive or appropriate to do so, without being aware that they are doing it. Co-Counselling helps us to become aware of our patterns so that we have more choice about how we act.

The Rescue Triangle describes common patterns that we may have learned that help us control other people's behaviour. This booklet describes those patterns and how they inter-relate with each other. Knowing about the Rescue Triangle will help you become more aware of when you or other people are acting in controlling ways. Awareness of your patterns is the first step in being able to change them.

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Everyone being in charge of themselves is very nice in theory but sometimes people's Rescue Triangle patterns can get in the way of this happening. Knowing about the Rescue Triangle will help you to move towards being in charge of yourself. And, as you become more in charge of yourself it is more likely that you will leave other people in charge of themselves.

Knowing about the Rescue Triangle will help you to move towards being in charge of yourself and will help you to leave others in charge of themselves.

Why is the Rescue Triangle so important for Co-Counselling?

One of the basic principles of Co-Counselling is that people are responsible for themselves. If you need something, it is your responsibility to ask for it. If you don't want to do something you can say 'no'. As client you are in charge of your session: it is up to you to use your time however you want. This might mean refusing or ignoring a suggestion from your counsellor.

Everybody being responsible for themselves is very freeing: in sessions, in socialising and in

relationships. If each person is in charge of themselves and you feel you can rely on them to ask for what they need and to say 'no' if they want to, you don't need to worry about how your behaviour is affecting them and you can just get on with being yourself.

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