

THE TED* LETTER™

By David Emerald

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What People are Saying about TED*:

“ I came away from last Wednesday and Thursday’s meetings so pumped! You have brought an immense amount of expertise and ‘common sense’ together, in such a ‘Creative’ and simple way, that speaks to everyone, no matter where they are on their journey. You brought me to heights I needed to be! ”
Blessings...
Sabrina R. Porter, LNFA, SML
V.P. of Resident and Community Relations
Presbyterian Communities & Services

“ I can’t express how much I learned from your 2 days with us! This is the beginning of a journey for me and our organization that will open doors of opportunity! I am already using the ‘postcards’ that I have created from your diagrams. I have shared the principles of ‘shifting’ with my own

Addicted to Drama: Part I

“When had I first taken up the Victim Orientation? I guess it went back to my early family life. No doubt my parents had loved me and did the best they could, but they had unwittingly repeated certain unhealthy patterns from their own upbringing. I suppose if I followed the genealogical map of the Victim Orientation, it would lead all the way back to early humans and the fight, flee, or freeze reactions that had helped them survive to populate the world. And now evolution had placed me at this critical choice point: I had the opportunity to break the Victim cycle, to stop the patterns that passed it on from generation to generation.”

From Chapter 5 "Another Friend" ([The Power of TED* - Revised & Updated](#))

Several weeks ago I was in a conversation with a friend who observed that her mother was addicted to drama. She shared how her household was filled with drama as she grew up. Now, as an adult, my friend has come up with the strategy of having her mom watch television dramas when she visits as a way of diverting energy from creating family drama.

The drama addiction shows up at work, too. Recently, while exploring [how to apply The Power of TED* with the leadership team](#) of an organization, we talked about how the drama addiction plays out in teams. There are those who are so firmly rooted in the reactivity of the Victim Orientation that, if a period of relative calm lasts too long, they will look for and/or create problems to react to, thereby feeding the need for drama. One executive actually had a nickname for such a person from a previous organization. "Savior Sam" needs a crisis so he can play the role of Rescuer to "prove" his worth to the organization.

Drama is not limited to home and work. The addiction to drama is endemic to our world. It shows up in the daily news, in cultural clashes, in generational quarrels, in popular entertainment, and in many other monumental and mundane ways. This addiction is every bit as real as other addictions and actually results in deeply ingrained brain patterns that are a challenge to "rewire" (which will be the subject of an upcoming newsletter).

Where does the addiction to drama come from?

I came face-to-face with this question with the death of my mother late last month. Drama was certainly a frequent visitor in my experience of growing-up. As I was preparing for her eulogy, I found myself pondering the story of her life - and the roots of her own addiction to drama.

Mom was born in 1925. She was truly a child of the Great Depression in the United States and experienced all the hardships of that period. She lived in fear, at times not knowing literally where the next meal was coming from. As her dad left seeking work - often disappearing for long periods of time - she experienced the uncertainty of when or if she would

Executive Coach. Thank you again for the gift of your time with us last

week! ”

Blessings,
Brenda Terry, MS
Vice President of Rehabilitation & Wellness
Presbyterian Communities and Services

“ I started reading your book a couple of weeks ago and at the same time I was going through some changes in my job. These were changes that I was not really ready for as I had to start working with a different group of people. I believe that The Power of TED* helped me recover more quickly from 'the news'...

Thank you for helping me through this with your wonderful book! ”

P.H.

“ I just want to say thank you...as a survivor of child abuse - I find that reading your book is bringing me the clarity I needed to become a "creator" instead of continuing as a "victim". Today I am feeling a little better about my journey into the future I am creating for myself... ”

With Gratitude,
P.H.

“ Powerful and timely message in (the February) issue of TED*. I am in awe of the gift that your work extends to a world crying out for relief from fear and scarcity. May you be blessed with a significant increase in global awareness about this beautiful gift you have to offer a world starving for its wisdom. ”

Love,
Jim A.

“ I read your book as soon as it arrived and so appreciated your story. It is dynamic and such a profound approach to life. For the next few days, I observed my interactions with friends and my husband... How empowering to have this tool! ”

Judy M.

“ I absolutely love and deeply appreciate this little gem of a book. It shares such a powerful and empowering message, with a loving, gentle, concise flow that keeps you wanting to learn more and more.

Thank you. ”
Erica B.

“ The Empowerment Triangle is a highly original and effective escape from the Drama Triangle. ”
Stephen Karpman, M.D., originator of the Karpman Drama Triangle

“ When practical advice meets profound, yet simple, explanations for human behavior, we can learn, change, and grow. The Power of TED* does just this, and beautifully. ”

Annie McKee
Founder, Teleos Leadership Institute and co author *Becoming a Resonant Leader*, *Resonant Leadership*, and *Primal Leadership*

see him again. She developed the insecurity that was the hallmark of that time. These experiences reverberated throughout the rest of her life.

I have learned, through my years of work in leadership and human development, of the lasting impact that the first 10 years has on our lives and how it significantly shapes the way we deal with - and move through - our human experience.

Reflecting on her early childhood realities gave birth to a deeper compassion for the pattern of drama and where they came from in her life.

But there is more to Mom's story. She also served as an example that we can make the shift happen in our own lives from the dependence on drama to a more empowered way of living and relating to others.

In the last few years of her life, Mom magically transformed from one who always had a complaint to a real, sustained equanimity and acceptance of what was going on in her life. While there were still moments and episodes of drama, they were far fewer. When I asked her what had happened to make the shift, she shared, "I sat here one day and said to myself, 'you can either focus on what's wrong or accept and be happy about the life you have.' I decided to be happy."

Such a shift impacts those around you. There was one aid at the long-term care facility who really went out of her way to care for Mom during her final few years. Mom was the first person she looked in on in the morning and the last before the end of her shift. She both gently challenged Mom to do certain things for herself and would do special things for her (like fix her hair). It was not until the reception after the funeral that we learned why the relationship seemed so special. A couple years ago, when the aid's mother died, it was Mom that comforted her, would always ask how she was doing and served as a primary support system in her grieving. "I just wanted to return the favor," she shared.

So, when we are in the company of "drama kings and queens," if we can remember that these patterns are often deep-seated and may come from early life experience, our compassion grows deeper. By doing so, we lessen the likelihood of getting "hooked" into their dramas. As a Creator, we can then see and interact with them in a way that allows us to speak to outcomes and choices.

(This newsletter was written from the perspective of our interacting with others who are addicted to drama. However, another very important perspective needs to be considered: What if it is we who are the drama addict? That will be the subject of next month's "The TED* Letter.")

Putting TED* into Practice: Breaking the Cycle

When you find yourself in the company of "drama queens or kings," who seem to create and/or perpetuate the Dreaded Drama Triangle, the following

“ Conscious relationships begin with conscious individuals. Being a Creator in one’s own life is the heart and soul of The Power of TED*. This powerful little book points the way toward a hugely fulfilling life of empowering relationships - at work, at home, in the whole of your life. ”

Gay Hendricks, Ph.D. and Kathlyn Hendricks, Ph.D.

Authors of *Conscious Loving* (among many books) and co-founders of The Hendricks Institute

“ Knowing the characteristics of the Dreaded Drama Triangle (DDT) and its creative alternative, The Empowerment Dynamic (TED*) is remarkably transformative. It’s impossible for me to overstate my enthusiasm for this book! ”

Brian Johnson

Founder of PhilosophersNotes & Zaadz/Gaia.com

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tips can help break the cycle:

- Don't buy in - Stay centered in a Creator Orientation and view their need for drama as a Challenger to you to practice [The Empowerment Dynamic](#).
- Deepen compassion - Remember, you may not know how they inherited their addiction and how deeply patterned it might be. This is not about "enabling" the drama or "making it OK." Instead, compassion can help you to not get "hooked" into their pattern.
- See them as a Creator - Whether they know it or not or act like it or not, to see them as a Creator increases the range of responses you can have to them.
- Focus on choices - Rather than resisting or pushing back on their drama, focus on the choices you/they face in moving forward. Step into the Coach role of TED* and ask: "How do you and/or we choose to respond to the situation at hand?" or "What do you/we want to create?"

TED* Sightings

Check out my [9-minute conversation with Stephen Karpman, M.D.](#) - the originator of the [Drama Triangle](#) - about the origins of his Drama Triangle and his thoughts about The Empowerment Dynamic (TED).



Special thanks to Dr. Karpman for taking the time to visit with me and allow us to record part of our conversation in his garden!

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To the Creator in you!

David Emerald

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