



COMMUNICATION TOOL

# RESPECT AT FACE VALUE



We are the source of what we are feeling. Anyone gets to feel anything for any reason.

Julia Colwell, PhD

# RESPECT AT FACE VALUE



*staying out of triangle*

- ✓ **Take what others say at 'face value'** even if you feel what they are saying is not genuine, disordered, mean or even manipulative.
- ✓ **Believe them so they may experience the responsibility** of their words, along with the realistic consequences for their words.
- ✓ **Allow others to have emotions, perceptions, complaints, etc.,** rather than 'rescue,' 'fix,' blame or criticize them.
- ✓ **Remain on solid ground, allow others to be in the Triangle alone,** rather than jumping in. This does not make you the 'bad guy.'
- ✓ **Resist the urge to mindread or jump in the Triangle to rescue,** defend, argue or explain. Don't take the bait. Stay out of the Triangle.

## **Here are ways to Respect at Face Value:**

- "This deserves time for me to think about."
- "Ok, good to know."
- "I hear what you are saying."
- "I need time to process this."
- "Tell me more."
- "Thank you for being honest."
- "I appreciate you letting me know."
- "Ok, I do not fully agree but now I know how you feel."
- "This is a big deal and I'm going to take a day to think about this."

**If you are feeling calm and able, you can ask about giving advice or support. Make sure you don't give unsolicited criticism or help (unless someone is in real immediate danger).**

- Do you want my support or ideas on how to help you through this? Or help us get through this?

# RESPECT AT FACE VALUE



*staying out of triangle*

**I'm not ready for a relationship right now.**

Responses:

**RESCUING** But, you're amazing and deserve a relationship. I really like you.

Let's keep dating anyways.

**PERSECUTING** I've wasted six months with you! You're terrible.

**DEFENDING/VICTIM** But you said you were ready before. You hurt me.

**RESPECT AT FACE VALUE** Thank you for letting me know. I need to leave and take time to process this.

**You hurt my feelings.**

Responses:

**RESCUING** Oh no! I'm so sorry I hurt your feelings. I feel awful.

**PERSECUTING** You hurt my feelings all the time. Toughen up.

**TAKE AT FACE VALUE** Thank you for letting me know. Tell me more.

**I can never trust you again.**

Responses:

**RESCUING** I'm so sorry you feel that way. This is awful! What have I done?

**PERSECUTING** You shouldn't say things like that.

**DEFENDING/VICTIM** You make me not trust you either. Because you're controlling, I feel bad and stressed.

**FACE VALUE** Ok, this is definitely good to know.

**I screwed up my relationship/diet/project! I'm the worst.**

Responses:

**RESCUING** You aren't the worst! You're amazing. People screw up all the time.

**PERSECUTING** You shouldn't be so mean to yourself.

**DEFENDING/VICTIM** It makes me sad when you talk about yourself like that.

**TAKE AT FACE VALUE** Thank you for being honest about what you're going through and how you're feeling. Do you want my support or ideas on how to help you through this?

# HOW TO STAY OUT OF THE DRAMA TRIANGLE

## DON'T TAKE THE BAIT

### FROM RESCUING TO DRAMA AND POWER-STRUGGLE

"I'm hungry."

"You want me to make you something?"

"Naw, I'm fine"

"Come on, you need to eat something! What should I make?"  
POWER-OVER/RESCUING

"I said I'm fine. I'll eat later."

"But you said you were hungry!"  
POWER-OVER/CRITIC

"I said I'm fine! Why can't you let me be?"  
POWER-UNDER/VICTIM

"Sorry... but wow, your anger is ridiculous."  
POWER-OVER/CRITIC

### TAKING 100% RESPONSIBILITY: NOT MORE -OR- LESS

"I'm hungry."

"You want me to make you something?"

"Naw, I'm fine"

"Ok, let me know if you change your mind."  
RESPECTING AT FACE VALUE

"I might get grumpy now though but whatever."  
POWER-UNDER/VICTIM

"Ok, thanks for letting me know."  
RESPECTING AT FACE VALUE

Note: If they get 'grumpy' and you don't want to be around them, simply take the time and space you need away. Allow your partner to have their emotions without jumping into the Drama Triangle.

**ALLOWS PARTNER 100%  
RESPONSIBILITY FOR THEIR OWN  
EMOTIONS AND FOR  
COMMUNICATING THEIR OWN  
NEEDS, WANTS AND LIMITS**

The illusion that everything will just turn out magically without having to communicate wants and needs in a relationship is an immaturity that will make true connection impossible.

*Athena Vahn*

