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Recognizing Invisible Oppression With the Drama Pyramid: Adding the Bystander Role and the Cultural Parent to the Drama Triangle

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ABSTRACT

This article explores the Bystander role in greater depth and redefines its position from one of being an onlooker to one having an integral element in the drama triangle, which makes the triangle a three-dimensional drama pyramid. This new visualization highlights the role of the Cultural Parent lodged within one's psyche, which impacts all the drama roles. Recognizing invisible oppression allows us to see the game roles that we may be taking on without awareness. Including the Cultural Parent in the drama pyramid invites contextual awareness and challenges theory that primarily focuses on intrapsychic processes, thereby inviting contextual awareness. The authors propose functional fluency as a useful model that can enables us to step out of game roles. Case examples from a training session are presented where trainees recognized invisible oppression in everyday situations and found options to intervene using the functional fluency model.

The Story of Eklavya

Eklavya is a tribal character in the Indian epic *Mahabharata*. He is the son of the Nishadha (a forest tribe) chief and grew up fantasizing about becoming the greatest archer in the world. His ambition troubled his parents because they believed Eklavya desired more than people of their tribe were historically "allowed" to want. Nevertheless, they supported him. Eklavya sought the tutelage of the greatest master of archery: Dronacharya (Drona), the tutor to the royal Pandava princes. Dronacharya refused saying that he was a Brahmin, the highest caste as per the Vedic system, and could not teach a non-Aryan outcaste (a person with no caste). Although disheartened, Eklavya picked up the mud on which Drona had walked and sculpted Drona's image with it. He paid obeisance to the mud-idol and continued to practice on his own. We know that he grew into a great archer because one day he muzzled a barking

dog by filling its mouth with arrows that he shot in rapid succession. The dog was not hurt but could not bark anymore.

As the story goes, the dog wandered into a forest camp where Drona was teaching his royal disciple Arjuna. Both marveled at this feat of archery and set out to find the exceptionally skilled archer. They soon found Eklavya, wearing matted hair and covered with filth, practicing archery in front of the idol of Drona. Seeing his statue, Drona instantly recognized Eklavya, who now possessed archery skills superior to Arjuna's. Drona blessed Eklavya and according to custom asked him for guru-dakshina, the ritual fee or gift that a student owed to a teacher. Being asked for guru-dakshina meant that Eklavya had been accepted as Drona's pupil. Eklavya felt blessed and entreated Drona to ask for anything he wished. Drona asked for Eklavya's right thumb, with which he wielded the bow and arrows. Eklavya, unruffled, pulled out his hunting knife, swiftly cut off his thumb, and gave it to Drona. His teacher blessed him and said he would be remembered for his loyalty and dedication.

This story is told and retold as a didactic tale of glorious sacrifice made by a student to honor their teacher and of individual success achieved through hard work, determination, and dedication.

The Cultural Parent and Drama Roles

In considering Eklavya's story from the perspective of transactional analysis, we find it useful to think about it in terms of the drama triangle developed by Stephen Karpman (1968). This model describes dysfunctional social interactions and illustrates a power game that involves three roles: the Victim, who feels oppressed and helpless; the Persecutor, who blames and criticizes, and the Rescuer, who has a need to make peace and save others. Each role represents a common and ineffective response to conflict. Later, Petruska Clarkson (1987) was the first TA practitioner to diagrammatically conceptualize the Bystander role. She posited Bystanders as an "audience" standing outside the drama triangle looking in.

Applying all of this to Eklavya's story, we recognize Drona as the Persecutor and Arjuna as the Bystander who witnesses oppression and colludes with it by not acting. And many might conclude that Ekalavya was a Victim who did not consider his options in the moment, one of which was to say no. Here is where an understanding of the Cultural Parent gives us deeper insight into the drama roles that people take on. Constituted by sociopolitical frameworks, the Cultural Parent is the shared Parent ego state of all the people in a culture because of their common context. It contains "the conscious and unconscious boundaries of acceptable behavior, whether or not what is acceptable is harmful or helpful to the individual" (Drego, 1983, p. 226).

In this story, the Cultural Parent is the caste system, the rules of which defined the roles of Arjuna, Drona, and Eklavya. It naturalized the power hierarchy, structured the individuals' imagination, and defined their worldviews. Arjuna, as the royal, held the political and social power. Could Drona imagine himself going against Arjuna by acknowledging another student? The barbarous act of asking for a thumb was seen as the rightful obligation to a Guru, which Eklavya willingly agreed to without a second thought. None of the three could imagine that Eklavya had the right to be

more talented than a prince. That Eklavya could say no was an impossible idea to all. So there was no difference between an individual and a collective viewpoint. Sedgwick (2021) wondered

> what the distinction between the Parent and Adult ego states was supposed to look like in a place where viewpoints converged without serious challenge. Things just were as they were so there is no need for the Parent to suppress dissenting opinion. (p. 6)

In a way, Arjuna is also limited by the caste system. He has no freedom to be who he wishes to be. He has to be what a royal prince must be. So Eklavya's story as it appears in the *Mahabharata* played the role of sustaining the Cultural Parent. It maintained Arjuna's supremacy and the cohesion of social order.

The Personal Is Political

Eklavya's story highlights how the script interacts with sociopolitical factors when individuals make choices. Berne's (1972/1975) view that people are born princes and princesses (p. 58) does not account for the vast inequality and alienation created by gender, race, caste, nationality, and wealth, to name just a few factors. The most prominent challenge to Berne's idea of individual agency and autonomy was offered by radical psychiatry as developed by Steiner and Wykoff in the 1960s. In his radical psychiatry manifesto, Steiner (Steiner et al., 1969/1975, pp. 3–6) wrote that extended individual psychiatry "silently colludes with the notion that people's difficulties have their sources within them while implying that everything is well with the world" (pp. 3–4). Despite this, Berne's views about change being an intrapsychic process remains largely unchallenged in TA practice even today. The human is imagined as a "perfectible" being, a free agent who is limited or shackled only by their archaic unconscious patterns, which can be overcome through awareness and self-work. The core premise of radical psychiatry—that psychiatric problems are a manifestation of alienation that results from cultural oppression—is still valid, even if the theory and methods may be seen by some as outdated.

We argue that human agency is structured and hemmed in by the Cultural Parent, the sociopolitical narratives and discourses of power that operate in invisible ways and outside our awareness, what Steiner referred to as oppressive social structures. Sociopolitical power uses institutions such as schools; hospitals; the patriarchy; heteronormativity; media; governments; corporations; laws; markets; knowledge systems; "isms" such as racism, classism, and ableism, to name a few; social beliefs; family values; and the arts to set the boundaries of normality. These discourses are internalized and introjected by us. They constitute our subjectivities, and they "normalize" oppression. The alienation that comes with the oppression either remains outside our awareness and/or prevents us from acquiring and exercising personal power. Given that sociopolitical power constitutes us and our agency, can we really imagine individual agency outside sociopolitical narratives? Sedgwick (2021, p. 10) reminded us of "a lesson we are in danger of losing sight of—we can only come to understand and be ourselves in tandem with understanding the world and the opportunities and constraints which it brings" (p. 10). Integrating social and political awareness into our

models and practice is a responsible rejoinder to invisible oppression (Rowland & Cornell, 2021).

A bystander is a witness to a drama. When we witness a drama we are all bystanders. We morph into Bystanders—or, in other words, take on a drama role—if we do not "become actively involved when another needs help" (Clarkson, 1987, p. 82). How do we know when another needs help? Here we need to differentiate between real-life victims and drama role Victims. The Victim role entails a discount of the self—the person's responsibility, capability, or choices in situations—to further their script. When people take on drama roles, they are not in the here and now and are unawarely following the strategies that they decided on as little children. A victim, on the other hand, is a person who, in the here and now, is adversely affected by another person's action or an oppressive structure. Their challenge is not a result of their discounting their agency or ability or resourcefulness. Examples of victims are a person trapped in an earthquake or a person fired from a job because of their sexual preference.

"Is help needed?" is not answered in a straightforward manner and requires accounting for many factors. We may assume that we only need to help victims and not Victims. But in many cases, Victims need help too, because the discounting may be outside of their awareness. In this paper, the factor we want to focus on is that the boundaries between Victim and victim blur in real life and that adds an additional complexity. A victim could be a Victim and vice versa. This differentiation is sometimes challenging because of drama triangle theory's apolitical focus on an individual's intrapsychic process. If we believe that all that is needed for change is for individuals to look inward, let go of what holds them back, and choose to feel empowered, we are likely not to recognize many situations in which people are victims and need help. Without social and political understanding, we may be blind to the marginalization and alienation of groups, rendering them powerless in certain situations. We may continue to be Bystanders to the invisible oppression, thereby passively colluding with it. Worse, we may also actively contribute to the oppression by judging or blaming the victim for not doing enough to change their plight.

The Cultural Parent helps us to see oppression in what one may think was just a drama. For instance, in the Indian culture a husband may gloat publicly about "allowing" his wife to work. The wife discounts the shame she experiences and continues life as normal. We may see it as a game. The wife is an educated adult with agency and does not need Rescuing. But the cultural pressure on her to be grateful for having a "progressive" husband may prevent her from recognizing her resentment. It is a psychological game, and it is oppressive. They are intertwined.

All the drama roles are impacted by the Cultural Parent. A Bystander's ability to help is also defined by the social power structure and where they are located in it. For instance, if women in India witness violence on the street, they cannot intervene and help because the situation is unsafe for them. If they try to intervene, they may be violently punished for their "audacity" in challenging men.

We felt a need for a model that allowed practitioners to not just look inside a person and consider script influences but also look outside to consider the socio-political context, thus bridging intrapsychic and contextual dimensions. Taking forward Clarkson's (1987) work conceptualizing the Bystander role and depicting it

diagrammatically, we expand the drama triangle into the drama pyramid that includes the role of Cultural Parent and integrates the Bystander role within the triangle. People switch moment to moment across all four roles, sustaining relational dynamics as they shift roles (see Figure 1).

We conceptualize the Bystander as an integral part of the drama, one of the four drama roles, not as an outsider looking in.

As mentioned earlier, Clarkson (1987) defined a Bystander as a "person who does not become actively involved when another needs help" (p. 82). We agree but go on to add that we may not just be accidental or innocent witnesses to a drama. A person may come across as a Bystander, but the drama may be an outcome of some earlier action on our part. Let us take the example of a domestic setting in which the father is sitting on a chair reading a newspaper while the mother scolds the child. The father continues to read and does not intervene between the mother and the child. One way of reading the situation is to see the father as a Bystander who chooses not to engage in the drama while the mother is in the role of the Persecutor and takes on the task of disciplining the child. However, our perception can shift if one asks who holds the power in this situation: the Cultural Parent operating here invisibly but determinedly in the form of patriarchy. Gender roles are clearly defined in this system. The physical and economic control rests with fathers, whereas the lion's share of the domestic and caring work is left to mothers. Patriarchy prevents an egalitarian division of work hours, allows fathers to abdicate their responsibility in raising children, and hands the task of disciplining to mothers. The overburdened, unsupported mother turns Persecutory to children, and the father remains a well-meaning Bystander in the drama unfolding in his home. Once we account for patriarchy, the father is no longer the silent Bystander but the Persecutor. The drama pyramid thus makes visible the dynamics of the invisible. Our attempt is to generate a theoretical construct that reveals the complexity and interconnectedness of various factors.
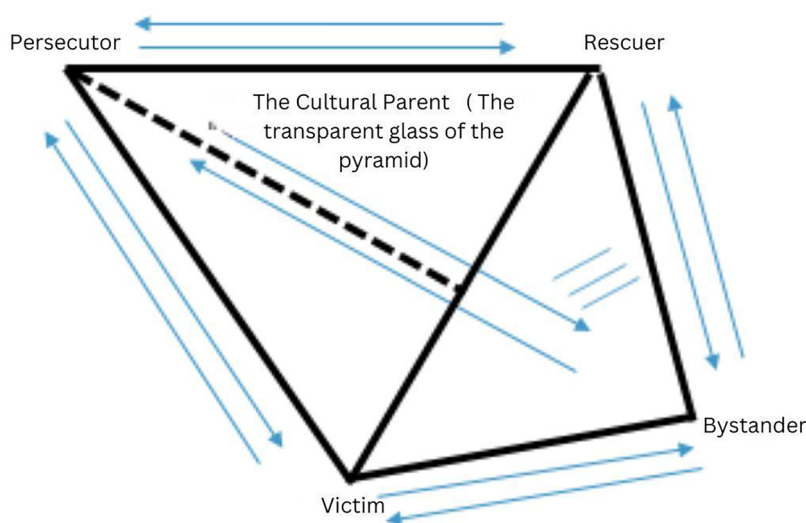

Figure 1. The Drama Pyramid.

We contend that because we lack contextual understanding, we may believe we are Bystanders outside the drama, but actually we are very much part of the drama. Perhaps the drama is being staged for us (like two children fighting only when the parent is present). Perhaps the drama originated because of some action on our part (like our purchases leading to exploitation of farmers). Perhaps we are part of a much larger drama of which we are not aware (like an international crisis). "The privilege of innocence held by those who do not enact the central roles of the drama carries with it the existential responsibility for applauding, editing, influencing, or aborting the show" (Clarkson, 1987, p. 86).

Our task here is to check if the drama has an invisible oppressive element. Many psychological games may actually be oppressive because of sociopolitical and cultural factors. We question the assumption that games are purely intrapsychic processes in a world in which there are such invisible power differentials. If we did not own our responsibility as Bystanders, we would be moving into drama roles. Similarly, even when we choose to intervene, we need to check how we stay out of the drama roles.

The Glass Structure of the Pyramid as the Cultural Parent

Impacting the different roles and mediating their relationship is the powerful presence of the Cultural Parent as the glass structure of the pyramid: invisible but solidly present. The Cultural Parent defines who really holds the power in situations.

The Cultural Parent is integral to the drama pyramid because most aspects of our lives are political. Politics (with a capital P) has to do with elections and political parties. However, politics (with a small p) is about an "overt or covert struggle over power, resources, and affirming identities" (Baines, 2011, p. 6). Our actions determine who has the "right and opportunity to feel positive about themselves, their identities, and their futures" (p. 6).

Theory impacts how we make meaning of psychological distress. Including the Cultural Parent in the drama pyramid is significant because it challenges theory that mainly focuses on intrapsychic processes and implies that all psychological problems stem from internal deficiencies. When we ignore contextual factors that contribute to oppression, we overlook possibilities for sociocultural change.

According to Drego (1983),

> an unhealthy Cultural Parent is one which wants to (1) repeat old history over and over again without change; (2) keep things the way they are, because this is safe and familiar; (3) assume responsibility for others that these others can well assume for themselves; (4) provide punishments for new and untried behavior even where such behavior is life-giving and healthy (6) [sic] keep power over others and enjoy controlling them for the sake of controlling; (7) destroy anything, however good, that threatens the maintenance of control. (p. 226)

Given that the Cultural Parent operates through socially sanctioned and culturally acceptable institutions and practices, many of us may not be aware that we are Bystanders. Examples of oppressive practices include the idea of the father "giving away" the bride or having exam processes that measure and assess only one type of

intelligence or something as insidious as asking a person to reveal their marital status while filling in forms.

The Significance of the Bystander Role

In many situations, Bystanders have the power to influence events. The earlier Bystanders act, the more they can prevent the oppression from escalating. However, fear may prevent them from acting. This fear could arise from a lack of safety in the here and now or from their script. Another reason Bystanders may not act is that they may not recognize an act as oppressive because it may be culturally acceptable. So we may be Bystanders in many situations and not be aware that we have unconsciously taken on the role. "Because bystanding is usually done out of awareness and not as a deliberate act of malice or neglect, the concept should not be used to make people feel not-OK" (Clarkson, 1993, p. 161). Clarkson believed that through education, we could invite people to be more aware and take more responsibility for the world.

We agree and asked ourselves how we could respectfully invite people to intervene in Bystanding situations. Choosing a response while being a Bystander is a delicate dance that requires Bystanders to choose responses that do not persecute the Persecutor or infantalize or shame the victim further. Bystanders also need to account for their own safety. Finding ways to intervene without taking on a drama role is not easy or obvious. However, we found the functional fluency model developed by Susannah Temple (2002) to be a creative way to generate options.

The Functional Fluency Model

Temple (2002) created the functional fluency model as a model for human social functioning and a tool for behavioral diagnosis and personal development. Functional fluency is the ability to naturally, flexibly choose behavioral responses that allow us to function well with others. When we are fluent, we recognize many options that can work rather than fall back on a favorite, static, learned way of responding. Thus, functional fluency is responding, not reacting (Temple, 2015, p. 12).

Functional fluency is based on three aspects of human functioning: growing up, surviving, and raising the next generation (Temple, 2015, p. 12). The model categorizes these as self-actualization, reality assessment, and social responsibility. These categories are divided into five elements of social functioning. These elements are about what we do socially, and the model further explains how we do these, effectively or ineffectively (p. 13). This level offers a map of nine modes and the behavioral descriptions for each mode, thus providing a behavioral menu that we can choose from. The corners are the less effective modes whereas the central modes are the effective ones. The accounting mode is an internal sense-making mode and allows us to choose from the four positive modes (see Figure 2).

When learning to use the functional fluency model, participants gain familiarity with the effective modes, use accounting modes to generate options, and experiment with combinations of modes that they believe will serve them and others well.

Negative control **DOMINATING MODE**	Negative control **MARSHMALLOWING MODE**
Positive control **STRUCTURING MODE**	Positive care **NURTURING MODE**
Accounting element **ACCOUNTING MODE**	
Positive socialized self **COOPERATIVE MODE**	Positive natural self **SPONTANEOUS MODE**
Negative socialised self **COMPLIANT/RESISTANT MODE**	Negative natural self **IMMATURE MODE**

Figure 2. The Nine Modes of Behavior of the Functional Fluency Model (Temple, 2004, p. 200).

Why the Functional Fluency Model?

Although the drama pyramid invited participants in the training described in the next section to search for invisible oppression that may be normalized by culture—in other words, assess what was wrong—functional fluency offered them a way to generate creative options—in other words, decide how to responsibly intervene in situations in which they found themselves Bystanding, without taking on any drama roles. It gave them a structured way to put their knowledge into action.

The functional fluency model challenges the contamination that intervening is always unpleasant or unsafe. Participants try on each mode and improvise. The novelty helps them recognize and challenge their conditioned, familiar responses and move into a curious, malleable psychological state. Because the training occurs in a group, one person's improvisational attitude and propositions stimulates others to stretch their imagination. As they push for options, they break through their impasse and their motivation to act increases. Repeated practice with multiple examples helps them to develop the capacity to spot invisible oppression and respond sensitively. It offers a positive and optimistic way of moving people from caution to courage.

How We Used the Functional Fluency Model

In a training session of 2 hours, we invited people to list situations in which they believed they witnessed a drama and had not done anything about it. This was an attempt to connect the model to their own experience.

Use of the functional fluency model always starts with the use of accounting mode behavior. The first task of the participants was to assess the impact of the Cultural

Parent and explore if any invisible frameworks made it difficult to recognize the oppression. When groups are invited to examine social, political, and cultural factors impacting any situation, they are better able to see cultural expectations that they believe to be "normal." It is the simple act of attending to and accounting for the social, political, and cultural factors that make the invisible visible.

If they identified an invisible framework, participants listed their own reasons for not acting. They explored the role of the Cultural Parent in the beliefs that prevented them from acting. As they did, they became aware of the pervasive impact of the Cultural Parent, their own drama roles, and how they were involved in what Clarkson (1993) called Bystander games. Their Adult resources were activated. Taking responsibility involved recognizing and challenging their own discounting.

A meta question such as "What questions need to be asked here?" helped access their critical thinking and judgment capabilities. Some of the tasks the group attended to while using accounting mode behavior included looking at the data, recognizing contextual factors, attending to feelings (their own and others'), and listening to intuition. Some of the questions they used in each situation when accounting included: What change would they like? What was their role in the context? Were they in charge? What were their options for intervening? Who should they talk to: the oppressor or the oppressed? What was the best place to intervene: in the group or in private? When was a good time: immediately or later? What was their relationship with both the oppressor and the oppressed? How would both the oppressor and oppressed react to their intervention? Was it safe to intervene? Would their intervening shame the victim further? Were there other preventive, long-term actions possible?

If the group recognized contextual factors that made it difficult for the victim to help themselves, they next had the task of generating options for how to intervene without taking on any of the game roles themselves. That was a phase of play. Participants tried on the various effective modes and combinations of the same, experimenting with language and tone, attending to both being and doing. Thus, using the accounting mode while playing with other modes allowed for a combination of logic and creativity.

Participants recognized that responses could combine several modes, and each person could choose a different blend of these modes to express themselves. These options were not prescriptive, and each person could choose what they felt comfortable with executing, considering the context and people involved.

Some Examples From the Training Session

We present here two of the examples that were discussed in the group. These highlight the pervasive and invisible ways oppression shows up in everyday interactions.

Example 1: Purvi shared that her husband regaled their two children with tales of his father's drinking while his father was present at the dinner table. These included stories about when he was found sleeping in a ditch or when he asked a fruit seller for potato fries. The children and the grandfather laughed, and the former asked for more such stories.

When the group first heard Purvi's story, they mentioned that there was no oppression. Without awareness of the Cultural Parent, this event seemed like a lively family dinner with laughter. The drama was not evident. However, on deeper examination of the Cultural Parent, it became evident that the father, by positioning tales of drinking as funny and by giving them generous space during dinner table conversations, was normalizing, even celebrating, excessive drinking, especially when done by men. Because the children were impressionable, they were vulnerable. Furthermore, the father was using humor to ridicule the grandfather while failing to mention how he put himself and others in danger in the process. The storytelling also discounted the grandfather's vulnerability owing to age and possible financial constraints or support requirements. So, it is not just the children but also the grandfather who may need help in this situation.

The options that the group generated for Purvi included:

1. Talking to the husband in private using a combination of modes: "I know you wanted to bond with the kids (nurturing—offering warmth and appreciation), but I wonder about the impact of these stories on them (inviting accounting). I don't want the kids to grow up thinking drinking is cool (cooperative—assertive expression of needs)."
2. At the dinner table, spontaneously remarking (open expression of self), "How come you find these stories funny? I feel sad when we talk about grandpa like that. I want to share stories that make us proud." Or tell the husband, "Also tell them why you chose not to drink, and why you decided that you will never be found in a ditch" (structuring—offering direction and challenge). Or just divert attention away by sharing different stories (structuring—taking charge).

Example 2: Kabir shared that his 14-year-old son was mean to his 10-year old son. The older sibling would often call the younger one "stupid" or "dumb" or "mad." Kabir was confused about how he could intervene without being a Persecutor to the older son and a Rescuer to the younger one.

The group at first said there was no oppression in this situation. They referred to developmental theories and said that children learned the limits of their power by testing it and that they must have a space to figure it out for themselves. So, they recommended bystanding as the best option in the situation.

A discussion about the Cultural Parent—normalization of abusive language based on cultural notions of normality, intelligence, and ableism—allowed them to see Kabir as a Bystander. Why would a child choose the word "stupid" to put down another child? Does the Cultural Parent imply that if you are not intelligent, you are lesser and deserve to be insulted? Is the ulterior message when we call someone "mad" "Why can't you be more like the rest of us?" Does the dominant group decide what is normal? Is mental illness seen as what is brought on by people because of a flaw or weakness in their character? "Dumb" used as an insult implies that it is shameful to have a physical impairment. If Kabir did not intervene, the children would not learn to understand how ableism manifested itself in everyday interactions or how name-calling was oppressive.

A deeper discussion on whether Kabir was a Bystander led to the group questioning if he had explicitly contracted with the children to not hurt each other. Clarke and Dawson (1998) viewed the absence of rules and guidelines as abandonment. We concur and find it a form of persecution. Thus, while a person may come across as a Bystander in a drama, they may have created the context for the drama.

Some of the options generated for Kabir by the group included:

1. Use structuring to contract for rules of acceptable language with one another with the children. Hold the boys accountable to the contract when the contract is violated. Plan the consequences for contract breaking along with them.
2. Use nurturing in one-on-one meetings with both boys. Coaching the older one, say something like, "I can see that you are angry with your brother. How could you express your anger directly, without name-calling?" Or "Are you aware of the impact of name-calling?"
3. Listening to and empathizing with the younger one: "How do you feel about how your brother talks to you? Would you like me to help you in any way?"
4. Say to both, "I have been observing these fights between the two of you and it is making me quite miserable" (spontaneous—expression of self). "I am wondering if we should do something about it. I am willing to work with you to figure this out. What do you think?" (cooperative—considering another's point of view).
5. Or say to both at a later time: "I am curious about the words people use to put others down. What does stupid mean to you?" (cooperative—listening with respect) and educate them about responsible language choice (structuring— offering them guidance and direction).

The Outcome of the Training

The training was experienced by participants as personally and politically empowering. They felt a greater sense of responsibility for intervening as they recognized the invisible oppressive frameworks present in the culture. They expressed satisfaction with the options they had generated. They were also relieved to recognize that intervening did not mean that they always had to confront directly and immediately. This allowed them to feel safe with intervening. Participants were able to use the accounting mode to assess the risk more accurately and to see the role of their own scripts in the process.

The group also concluded that any form of intervening involved some risks. However, the perspective that they gained by understanding invisible oppression and the creative options they generated made it easier for them to find courage and to step forward. They recognized that even if they were unable to act in the moment, they had options to act later to minimize the harm or prevent further harm.

Participants also discussed that if they believed there was no social or political power differential between the game players and all seemed equally resourced, they might choose to bystand. An example of doing so was two people of equal social status arguing about, say, car parking. But after an understanding of the functional

fluency model, participants were excited about generating creative options even in such situations. They came up with the option of offering the bickering neighbors tea as they stood arguing on the road. They imagined it would dilute the tension and allow everybody to have a laugh.

The question that Clarkson (1993) raised in her article was also raised in the group: Does this mean that people should get involved in every issue of which they have knowledge? They concurred with her view that "people cannot avoid Bystanding in some way or another in a world that is overwhelming in its need for responsible engagement in the plight of those genuinely less fortunate than ourselves" (p. 160). However, they also agreed that it is important to be aware and to ask, "What is the best way to be involved?" Preventing further harm by making structural changes came up as a significant option.

Their expanded perspective helped participants to recognize several ways in which they were Bystanding without awareness. The experienced functional fluency provided "a practical map and framework for putting TA's famous maxim 'I'm OK, You're OK' into action" (Temple, 2015, p. 21).

Conclusion

The utility of the drama pyramid as a model for understanding human behavior requires us to develop what Clarkson (1993) termed "foresight" or organismic empathy (p. 170), which comes from increased self-awareness about how we behave in bystanding situations. However, how do we develop foresight? Along with personal work, the answer may lie in political education that helps us to recognize that the availability of individual and the volitional notion of power ("I'm OK, You're OK") can also be a function of our sociopolitical privilege rather than simply in one's psychic awareness (Oates, 2021). We need antioppression learning that calls into question the middle-class conformity and indifference (inherent in the process of self-actualization) that psychotherapy can breed, and we need to understand invisibilized oppression that comes in the form of privilege and the training of practitioners.

This paper is an attempt to include sociopolitical dimensions in TA diagrams (Hay, 2021). We recommend that people other than the victim change to make it easy for the victim to empower themselves. Combining the drama pyramid with the functional fluency model offers options and helps people develop the courage to challenge the status quo, both at individual and collective levels. Campos (2018, p. 127) recommended that we as practitioners express our social responsibility by accounting for the influence of contextual factors on our client's functioning and collaborating with them and others to make positive changes to the environment.

Our practice needs to be attentive to the way different structures of oppression manifest in our daily lives and to do so in caring, engaging, and solidarity-based ways. In addition, we must periodically engage in critical reflection around the following themes:

1. How do we deal with power imbalances in the groups of which we are part?
2. How do we challenge theory or practice that alienates individuals or groups?

3. How do we assess if we are infected by normative thinking and are uncon-
sciously inviting adaptation to the normative frames of reference (Minikin,
2021)?

4. How do we gain culture-specific knowledge from our clients? How do we
engage with history and politics and recognize their relevance to our work?

TA theory was created to make complex psychological ideas more accessible. It
was meant to include and empower people. We urge practitioners not to lose sight
of that vision and to attend to both: individual interventions to address intrapersonal
aspects of a client and social action needed to remove oppressive barriers in the
environment. We must challenge the idea that the mental health of an individual is
separate from the health of the culture. If we see our roles as TA practitioners as
being to create a more equitable world, then we cannot afford to ignore the oppres-
sive Cultural Parent.

Disclosure Statement

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Notes on Contributors

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