<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic Area(s)</th>
<th>Case Manager Role</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Title</td>
<td>Case Manager Role/Karpman Triangle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Last Revised</td>
<td>3/21/07</td>
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<tr>
<td>Time Required</td>
<td>30 minutes or 45 minutes with extended group role play.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Purpose</td>
<td>To review Dr. Ford’s helping/abandoning/empowering model and introduce complementary models, the Karpman Triangle and healthy boundary models. These models can provide perspectives for discussion during role plays on all skill topics.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Audience</td>
<td>staff, partners, clients</td>
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<td>Method</td>
<td>Facilitator Presentation, Discussion, Role Play</td>
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<tr>
<td>Materials</td>
<td>Diagram of Dr. Ford, Karpman Triangle, and Healthy Boundary Model on chart pack</td>
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<td>Pre-Class Preparation:</td>
<td>Draw models on chart pack. If you want to use the option of role-playing the Karpman triangle, you can always identify a person in the audience willing to role play in advance and prepare them. Practice the role play as opposed to relying on a volunteer in the moment.</td>
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| Special Considerations | --These models are particularly relevant in regards to Chapter 10, Confrontation, where maintaining our role and boundaries can be more challenging.  
-- Some districts keep chart pack drawings of Dr. Fords Helping/Rescuing/Empowering model and the Karpman Triangle with the healthy boundaries model underneath posted in front of the class to refer to during practice and role plays, e.g., has the case manager stayed in the empowerment/healthy boundary role or slipped into the others, etc? |
| References or Resources | Many online resources exist for more information on the Karpman Triangle. |
| Contact(s)   | Pam Prichard (503) 947-5159 Training  
Contacts regarding use of models during practice sessions, particularly role plays:  
D15 Facilitation Team:  
Jennifer Lichens (503) 657-2118 x254  
Tracey Hansen (503) 657-2043  
Mychon Peatte (503) 731-4506 |
Review Dr. Ford’s Helping Versus Empowering Model: (5 minutes)

Trainer draws a line on a chart pack and labels one end as abandoning, the other end helping and the middle of the spectrum as empowering. Asks group, what kind of behavior on the part of the case manager can be identified in each role? Facilitator writes up the characteristics on the diagram next to/below each category it fits. Quick discussion: What is the effect on the client? What is the effect on the case manager? How does the dynamic influence the relationship between the two?

Look for in the discussion that the case manager may feel resentful/burnt out after the helping role. Client may feel more dependent, less capable. Client may feel angry, hopeless after being abandoned.

Empowerment should build the clients strengths, increase their capability and reduce the role of the case manager over time.

Workbook Activity page 10 (10 minutes)

Give participants a few minutes to complete. (3-4 min) After most people are through, ask groups to compare answers. (4-5 min) Could they identify the abandoning versus helping versus empowering responses? What’s the problem with the abandoning responses? The helping responses?

Complementary Model –Karpman Triangle (10 min)

How many have heard of the Karpman Triangle?

Draw a line horizontally on the page and ask the class to do the same. On the top half draw a pyramid. Write Victim on the top corner, rescuer on the left corner and perpetrator on the right corner.

This is a model from the work of Stephen Karpman about dysfunctional or unproductive helping relationships. It can be useful to us in understanding our roles when we work with clients and want to have positive confrontation.

A person can switch between all roles in the triangle, back and forth.

There are situations where a person is truly a victim and there is a perpetrator and a rescuer, e.g., a person is being beaten and someone
calls 911. Sometimes we continue to take these roles even when it is not appropriate or useful.

Give an example: A client has been evicted and says her landlord was out to get her as she had the money, but she had friends over and someone stole it and the landlord wasn’t willing to work with her.

Ask: If the caseworker is playing the rescuer, what might they say. (Agree with her, empathize with no confrontation, volunteer to pay, tell her what to do, etc.)
What effect does taking the rescuer role have on the client (victim)? Removes responsibility from them, treats them as incapable, increases their sense of being a victim.
What effect does it have on the rescuer? They take responsibility for the problem, become the authority, etc.

Now the worker finds out from looking at the narrative that this situation has happened several times before and the agency can no longer pay.

Let’s say the worker switches to the perpetrator...What might they say? (It’s your fault. You’re lying to me. You’ve done this before, etc.) What effect does this have on the dynamic? (Confirms the victim state as they are being attacked and blamed).

Now the client calls the manager and complains about the worker. (She said she’d help and then said she wouldn’t. Was rude, etc.) What role has the client taken now?

How might the worker switch to the victim? What might they say to a coworker or client? (I have tried everything with this client and it hasn’t worked. I’ve given you all these chances, now I’m running out of support service dollars, etc.)

In this model, as helping professionals, we may find ourselves rescuing others from their responsibilities, feel victimized and then persecute them.

Many of our clients have been victims of abuse in the past. However adopting this role on an ongoing basis can be unproductive. (Note: this model is not referring to the times when many of our clients have indeed been victims of childhood abuse or domestic violence, etc.)
This triangle is very common in the helping profession. If we are aware of it we can notice and step out of it.

If someone is feeling very much like a victim and reaching out to us as the rescuer, is it easy to adopt the role?

**Complementary Model--Healthy Boundaries: (5 min)**
On the lower half of another sheet draw two circles and label one observer + feedback and the other client.

This model indicates we are able to stand with our client and have clear boundaries/be separate. (The boundaries get very mushy in the triangle) We don’t take an enmeshed or opposing stance.
Can the observer provide validation and empathy? (Yes) (Along with the feedback)

Is it true that some of us fall into these roles sometimes? (Yes this is a common dynamic.)

**Options (additional 10-15 minutes?):**
- Role play the above illustrations of the Karpman Triangle with a member of the audience.
- If desired, use the model to demonstrate in other situations. Can ask the group to get ideas, “When else do you see this dynamic between case managers and clients?”

**Note:**
If reviewing these models when working on confrontation skills in Chapter 10, one question has come up regarding how do we bring this to the attention of co-workers if we see them slipping into these roles, e.g., the victim?

If working with observational statements in Chapter 10, prompt the group to answer this question using the model of an observational statement and a follow-up question. What would be a generalized observation? (Many of our clients feel hopeless and may feel like victims. It’s not uncommon for people in the helping profession to see themselves as victims too. Is it possible that this dynamic could be affecting you?)