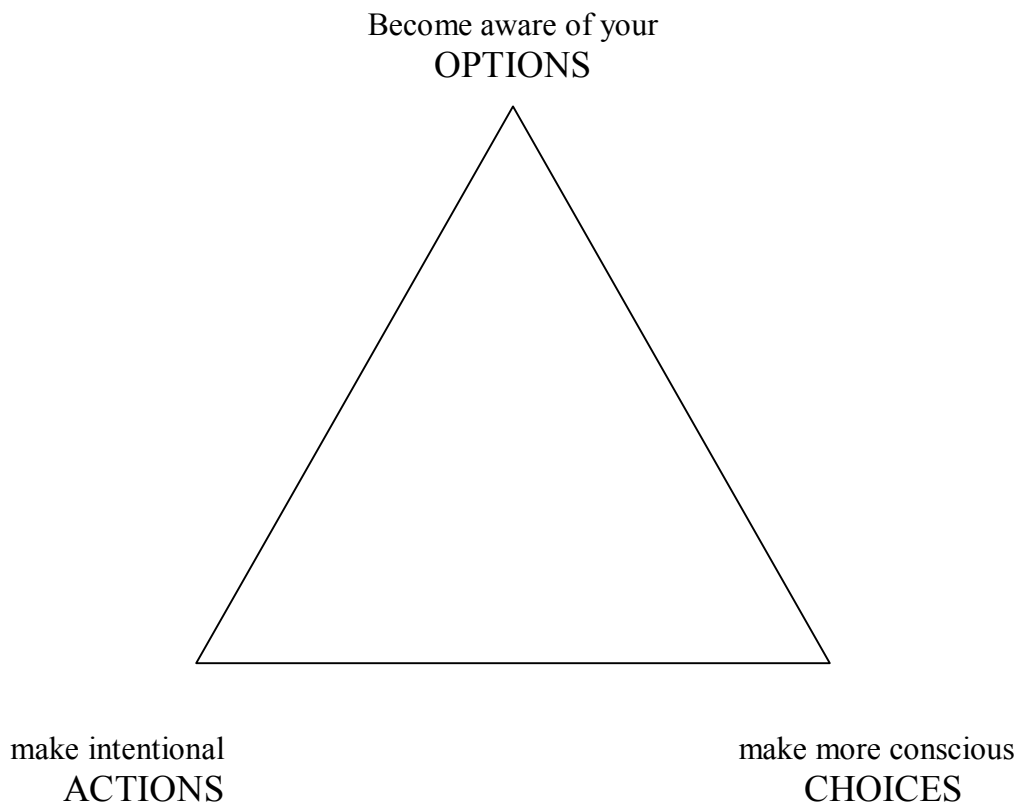


TRIADS: A TOOL FOR THINKING IN A NEW WAY



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"It has been known from the beginning of human culture that every movement is composed of three independent factors. Every religion speaks of a triple factor operating. For example, the Kaballah is constructed on the principle of the triad. So this principle is not new."

*Oscar Ichazo*

## *Acknowledgements*

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## *Dedication*

To Ingrid Lucia, for being the shining example of what's possible through triads, struggle, and the refusal to give up.

To Marisa, for having the amazing courage to throw it all out and start over without a clue, and then with only triads, her dreams, and her own gutsiness, to successfully rebuild her life in her own image.

To David, for sacrifice way beyond the call of duty.

To every soul on this planet yearning for freedom.

## *How to Use This Manual*

Originally I intended this to be a teaching manual for teachers to use in school classrooms. As it developed, however, I realized that it had potential for a much broader audience. Anyone can use triads and improve their thought and decision making processes.

The Table of Contents is annotated so that you can easily see what each chapter includes. This manual is not intended to be read straight through from front to back; it is meant to be dipped into, tried out and applied in life, returned to again and again.

Any of the chapters of Section One is a good starting point, depending on what catches your interest. Chapter Eight, Basic Triads, gives you the most commonly applicable triads, those that will have many uses in everyday life. Chapter Fourteen, Triads in Action, is a collection of examples of the application of triads by many different individuals.

Teachers will find Section Two helpful in gaining an overview perspective and specific pointers on how to go about introducing this tool into their classrooms.

Chapter Seven is included in order to give a picture of the triad within a broader perspective of literature and culture.

Chapters Eight through Thirteen are to be drawn upon and delved into as need and interest guide you.

All triads in this manual are original unless otherwise noted. All triads are capitalized to highlight them from the rest of the text.

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## ***Section One: What Are Triads?***

### **Chapter One: Personal Statement**

This is a manual about thinking in a new way, about thinking in triads. This is a way of thinking which does not come naturally, but one which can be learned. Thinking in triads is a tool for organizing and focusing thought, which empowers the individual by defining the elements within any given situation or dynamic, thus allowing conscious choice and direction. Triads bring to awareness possibilities that exist but often go unrecognized. This expanded awareness gives one the opportunity to make choices that are not based on past patterns or conditioning, but which are based on more accurate pictures. When choice and decision become more conscious, one is empowered to move toward one's own goals more directly, becoming more self-actualizing, as well as more aware of one's effect on others.

The triads which will be presented in this manual, and the ways of using them, have been developed over a period of over twenty years of working with adults as well as children of all ages. During this time period, I have been part of a group that has been, at times, as large as twenty-five people, including a core of about four or five who remained throughout and who have worked with and developed various tools for psychological growth. Our focus from the beginning has been to remove from our behavior patterns, perceptions, and responses, the blocks which stand in the way of our full expression and fulfillment, and to pass on to others the tools we discovered or invented that have proved workable and useful in this endeavor.

We encountered the idea of the triad in books about the ideas of G.I. Gurdjieff, a Russian philosopher. He stated that three forces are necessary for anything to manifest, and that we are third force blind: that we see only one or at most two forces.

The three forces were discussed as being ACTIVE/PASSIVE/ and NEUTRAL.

We applied this triad of ACTIVE/ PASSIVE/ NEUTRAL to our ways of interacting with each other and with life, and could see how each of us tended toward one of these forces more than the other two, and how difficult it was to make the shift to another force, even when we wanted to.

Linda was primarily NEUTRAL - she sat and observed everything - the perpetual witness. It was equally difficult for her to be ACTIVE, to exert her force toward another person, or to be PASSIVE, to receive and absorb another person's input into herself. Charles was always ACTIVE - always doing something to create an effect on others, but had great difficulty, like Linda, in receiving input, and also, unlike Linda, was rarely able to take the observer's position of clarity and witnessing. I was primarily PASSIVE, terrified of attempting to have direct effect on others, and continuously absorbing everything that went on around me, unable to step back from the action and watch unaffected. We learned to work together to overcome these propensities and weaknesses, lending our strengths to each other and becoming more balanced as a result.

We looked for other triads in our lives and interactions. We realized how easily we could come up with two elements or forces in any given situation or question, but the third seemed so elusive. What would Frank do, now that he had left the boat and gone home to his parents? He would stay there or come back to his wife and child, but what was the third possibility? When we saw it, it seemed so obvious, yet so often the third possibility eluded our perceptions, especially when we were emotionally tied up with the question. The third choice for Frank was to go somewhere else, set up an entirely new set of involvements with new employment, new family ties, new friends. (And this, in fact, was what he did, after vacillating between his wife and child and his parents for some time.)

We looked at our blocks to discover what third forces we were failing to see. Margaret seemed to have a pattern of getting stuck in relationships and situations, then suddenly

breaking from them, running away without a glance backward. For example, she hated living on the boat, was miserable, but never did anything to change the conditions or to arrange for different living conditions for herself until one day she just left, never to return even for a visit. What was missing? Why was she unable to keep from feeling stuck, or work within the situation to make things better?

We talked about her stuckness and realized that she was unable to redirect, that she would enter a new situation or interaction fully participating, but when the participation became distasteful she did not know how to work to alter the interaction, and so she left. Thus we saw the triad PARTICIPATE/REDIRECT/LEAVE.

Again, we could all see each other's and our own weak areas within this triad. I saw in myself how often in the past, especially in school, I would LEAVE while still physically present, by daydreaming or blanking out. We saw how some people are caught in a different duality within this same triad, such as REDIRECT/LEAVE. Jennifer, for example, ran into the room where the other children were already engaged in a game of house. "Let's be detectives and find the murderer!" She did not enter into the game and engage with the interaction ongoing, then offer her suggestion. Whatever the others were doing, she generally had a different idea and wanted them to shift their activities accordingly. Often she would not play if her REDIRECT was rejected. Just as Margaret and I needed to learn how to REDIRECT, Jennifer and others like her needed to learn how to PARTICIPATE.

Through observation, discussions, projects and experimentation, we formed probably hundreds of triads over these twenty-seven years. Some were useful only for a certain time or situation, and then forgotten. Some proved valuable over and over, across time and many changes of place, project, and people.

Throughout all of these twenty-seven years, we have had children of various ages involved within this ongoing process - living and learning among us. They showed us how

easy it could be to see a triad (a three- year-old spontaneously making a triad about how to sit safely on her mother's bike - pay attention to HER SEAT/HER FEET/and THE WHEEL ahead of her); and how hard it is to remember to use them at the appropriate moments. ("Do you have a triad for your trip into the city?" " No, but I'll make one now.")

This manual is the distillation of many years, of many projects, of many different people's input. It represents that which has proved valuable and useful to us and many others to whom we have passed on this tool of thinking in triads.

We live in a world of rapid change. Many educators today speak of the need for teaching thinking skills, stressing that process is almost more important than content. In this world of rapid change an ever increasing array of possible choices is opening - more choices of life styles, career opportunities, even the level of international cultural exchange now reaching more and more individuals. More than ever before in history, real possibilities exist for people everywhere to break from the patterns of their past - socio-economic background, early conditioning, even cultural patterns - and make new choices to define themselves, their lives, and their relationships in new ways. Yet how many individuals can actually take advantage of these possibilities? In an increasingly democratic world, we as parents, teachers, and world citizens, face a huge responsibility to empower ourselves and others to be able to make those choices which will lead to greater individual fulfillment as well as responsibility for our communities and the world as a whole.

How can children be prepared for this vital skill of making choices? I believe triads are an invaluable tool for intelligent choice making. A child who consciously asks, will this involvement be HELPFUL to me / HARMFUL /or INDIFFERENT, has an opportunity to choose differently than s/he might if simply following the patterns s/he sees in the environment. Consciously answering this question will lead the child to seek out those influences which are HELPFUL and give him or her strength to avoid those which are

HARMFUL, rather than being unconsciously pulled by forces of which s/he is unaware.

The triad is a tool of empowerment. It empowers us by making us more aware of our choices, enabling us to choose more consciously, rather than being driven by patterns or reactive responses. Having thus consciously chosen, we can better evaluate the results of our choices and can in the future choose differently if the results are not to our liking.

I believe in the inherent self-correction of the human being. People act in ways that they believe will lead them to fulfillment. Each person's idea of fulfillment is different, hence there are many different ways of achieving fulfillment. Using triads assists this individual process by organizing thought, by bringing into awareness all the factors, elements, or choices available, and by giving us conscious choice. Over the long run, this process of conscious choosing and evaluating the result leads not only to more self-fulfillment, but also to greater awareness of the effects of our actions and thus greater responsibility toward others.

At this point, I think it would be helpful to give some practical examples of the use of triads in everyday life.

## **Chapter Two :**

### **A Sampling of Triad Use in Everyday Life**

Bella, the main character in this chapter, is a composite of several people to whom we have taught the use of triads. Most of the examples of triad use in the story of her day are actual events told me by various people. All of them are based on real life situations common to us all, and although the entire day and its events are somewhat simplified, I believe that this chapter will help clarify the process of applying triads in everyday life.

For more examples of triad use in everyday life, see Chapter Fourteen.

## *Bella*

Bella was on her way to pick up some supplies in the city. On the way she had to walk past the bus terminal. There were always quite a few beggars hanging around outside, and she used to always hurry by, trying to ignore them but also feeling a bit guilty. Maybe they really needed her help.

Today, however, the sight of the beggars immediately brought to mind the triad GIVE/TAKE/SHARE(1). Well, obviously they want to TAKE. I can ASSIST/BLOCK/ or BE NEUTRAL. One approached her with a smile, wishing her a good day and asking for some change. She decided to ASSIST, since his attitude wasn't frightening. Seeing her give money to this first one, another immediately stepped up, blocking her path. "What about me?" This was what she hated. But she didn't need to feel threatened, she reminded herself - she was ready. Time to BLOCK. First, try a small BLOCK. "No, that's all I have now. Excuse me." And she moved to get around. But he followed her. Then, quickly, out came her police whistle and she let out a shrill blast. The man quickly fled and the sidewalk was clear all around her. She went on about her business.

Later in the morning, Bella was in the greenhouse back of her house. She had a big order for a wedding coming up and she was PRACTICING(2) some new techniques for floral arrangement. She examined each one, comparing it to the one before was it BETTER/ WORSE/ or the SAME? (3) She tried to make each one BETTER than the one before. Finally she felt she had several that were as good as they could get. Now she felt ready for this important order. Hopefully it would bring her referrals and repeat business.

1. GIVE/TAKE/SHARE and BLOCK/ASSIST/NEUTRAL are described on page 38.  
Each triad used in this chapter will be footnoted with the page number on which the description can be found.

2. WORK/PLAY/PRACTICE, page 40

"Enough WORK and PRACTICE for this morning. Time for PLAY!" she said to



herself. She was meeting George for lunch, and had plenty of free time before her son would be home from school.

She and George had known each other two years and had been growing much closer lately. She felt they were truly BUILDING a relationship (4), one that was growing stronger and deeper. They had struggled to keep from TAGGING each other with the labels of boyfriend and girlfriend, and had worked to BUILD communication, openness and equal sharing.

During lunch George told Bella of an offer his company had made him to go to California for a special training course. It meant advancement for him, more responsibility, and he was going to do it. He wanted her to come with him. It was only for six months - couldn't she swing it? All her expenses would be taken care of.

This was difficult for Bella. In the past, she might have impulsively dropped everything to go. But now she thought not only about her growing closeness to George and desire to BUILD their relationship, but her other goals as well. Would a six-month absence

HELP/HARM/ or HAVE NO EFFECT (5) on her business, her son's schooling and his involvements with sports? As attractive as it seemed at first, she had to admit it would be HARMFUL to these other goals. As she thought about it, she realized it might not even be HELPFUL to her goal of BUILDING her relationship with George. Allowing him to cover all the expenses would bring an element of NECESSITY into their relationship, and to BUILD as equal partners, she needed her economic independence. Also, their mutual respect for each other was based on the strong individual goals each had, as well as their sharing of

3. BETTER/WORSE/THE SAME page 42.

4. The Three Relationships, BUILT/NECESSITY/and TAGGED page 70.

5. HELPFUL./HARMFUL/INDIFFERENT page 42.

goals and activities. She had sometimes wondered if one of the reasons her marriage had failed was because she'd had no real life of her own then.

George seemed to understand. "I didn't really expect you would come, Bella, but just thought I'd throw that possibility on the table anyway." They had a good time over lunch, talking and laughing over past adventures and future plans.

Bella was in the kitchen when Scott, her 13-year-old son, came rushing into the house. "How was school today?" she asked him.

"Fine." He headed for the refrigerator. "Oh, Mom, guess what?" he said between bites of a sandwich. "I used that triad you told me about in football practice today.

" Which one, honey?"

"You know - GIVE/TAKE/SHARE and BLOCK/ASSIST/NEUTRAL. I messed up real bad on a play we were PRACTICING, and the coach really let me have it. Well, I thought I knew what I was doing on that play, and I started to tell him so, but then I thought, he's trying to GIVE me information, why should I BLOCK by arguing? So I chilled out and listened to what he had to say. And you know what, I actually learned something from it.

"Well, see ya later," and out the door he went, off to see his buddy next door.

Late in the afternoon she had a meeting with her friend Gail, who helped her with her books and accounting. Was she getting CLOSER TO HER GOAL of supporting herself solely off her flower business, FURTHER FROM HER GOAL, or REMAINING AT THE SAME LEVEL? (6) As they went over the figures together, they concluded she was REMAINING THE SAME. Well, at least she wasn't GETTING FURTHER FROM HER GOAL. But how could she increase business so she could reach the level of income she needed? After much discussion they came up with a triad of doing MORE ADVERTISING, looking for NEW MARKET POSSIBILITIES, and running a series of SPECIAL OFFERS. She would work on these three fronts for the next month and then re-evaluate her progress.

Her 14-year-old niece stopped by to visit that evening. "I was at the library this afternoon," she said, "and this guy was really bugging me - he kept asking questions and wouldn't leave me alone."

"Do you think he wanted to GIVE/TAKE/or SHARE?"

"I think he wanted to TAKE."

"Well, did you want to ASSIST/BLOCK/ or BE NEUTRAL?"

"I didn't think about that. I just answered his questions, hoping he'd go away."

"Well, that's ASSIST. If you had just ignored him, that would be NEUTRAL, and he probably **would** have gone away."

"What if he didn't? He kept staring at me, even though I kept going back to my writing."

"Well, then you would have to BLOCK."

"HOW? "

"You could go up to the librarian and announce in a loud voice, 'This guy won't leave me alone. ' I'll bet he wouldn't want to stick around after that.'"

"Probably not. Gee, thanks. I never thought of that. Want to play cribbage?" They spent a pleasant evening, playing until it was time for her niece to go home.

Before falling asleep, Bella spent a few minutes meditating. She tried to inwardly locate that state which was neither ACTIVE nor RESISTIVE, the state of EQUIPOISE. (7) In this state she felt a deep release and relaxation, and fell into a blissful sleep.

6. CLOSER TO MY GOAL/ FURTHER/ THE SAME page 42 .

7. ACTIVE/ EQUIPOISE/ RESISTIVE page 55.

## Chapter Three

### How Triads Assist the Thought Process

*Beyond Duality and The Single Focus.*

We are prone to thinking in dualisms- polarities such as body/mind, active/passive, them/us, etc. The use of triads opens the mind to possibilities which are always there, but which we fail to recognize. In the polarities above, for example, the third possibilities are, respectively, emotion; neutral; a mediator who is neither them nor us, or alternatively, a larger picture which encompasses both them and us, such as our community, our country, or the world.

When focused within a polarity or dualism, one is often paralyzed, unable to act to bring about a conclusion or resolve a conflict. The two poles alternatively command our allegiance, and we are unable to come to a resolution. Dualistic thinking is based on conflict, engenders conflict, and appears resolvable only by one pole winning and the other losing. The triad, on the other hand, opens up possibilities of synthesis and of new points of view unthought of within the confines of either-or thinking.

A single focal point is, in a different way, as limiting as dualistic thinking. When one sets out to do a task or project focused on only one element or idea, it is often difficult if not impossible to carry it through to completion. This one-faceted focus prevents you from seeing the various parts involved in the completed form. For example, if I set out to build a boat, focused on the one aspect of its ability to float, I will perhaps succeed in building a floating object, but this alone will not make it a successful boat. It must be able to go as well as float - it must have some means of propulsion. And if it can float and go, but I cannot stop it when I want to, I will probably soon smash it on the rocks or someone's dock, or some other object against which it must collide in order for it to stop. A successful boat must be able to

FLOAT, must be able to GO and must have some means of STOPPING when and where I wish to stop. As I ponder these three aspects of a boat, I encounter all the problems ever encountered in boats. For example, thinking about moving the boat leads to considering the problems of the various possible means of propulsion, methods of steering, and the elements which will assist, hinder or have no effect on the boat's speed through the water. If, however, I am focused on one or even two of the elements of the primary triad (in this case FLOAT/GO/STOP ) I would inevitably fail.

### *Bringing Focus to Confusion*

The use of triads helps focus the mind when you feel overwhelmed, confused, or that there are an unlimited number of choices or elements involved in a project or situation.

To continue with the example of the boat, if you were to start with no focus at all, but a myriad of thoughts connected with boats, some related to one another, others unrelated, some possibly completely irrelevant to boats, again you would find it difficult if not impossible to successfully tackle the project. Where to begin? If a focal point to start is chosen at random, this focal point will inevitably lead to the position first described above. And if no focal point is chosen, but you continue to meander through a seeming infinity of thoughts, you will be paralyzed by this overwhelming confusion, unable to act in any direction.

Forming a first, primary triad, and then organizing the elements within it into subtriads serves to organize the various thoughts and ideas, eliminating those that are irrelevant, connecting those which relate closely, and showing the underlying structure which connects them all. At first this seems a very difficult task, and the first triad attempted in such a project may prove to be the wrong one, incomplete. The results will show whether the triad was correct or lacking. Triad making is a skill, which, like any learned skill, improves with

practice. The first attempts at forming one's own triads may be crude and prove unworkable, but with practice, this facility will grow and prove invaluable.

### *Conscious Choice and Evaluation*

Many of our actions and responses are based on the patterns and conditioning of our past. Fritz Perls, founder of the Gestalt approach to psychotherapy, said that we live at only a fraction of our potential. Many others have echoed this statement. Gurdjieff described people as living in a sort of sleep, even though they appear to be awake. This, he charged, was due to the mechanicalness of our responses; we are caught in mechanisms that have been built into us through habit and conditioning, and are unaware of many of the decisions and choices we mechanically make.

Using triads can help break our automatic response patterns and allow us to choose our actions based on present realities, rather than on past conditioning. Many of the basic triads, such as HELPFUL/HARMFUL/ INDIFFERENT, enable you to evaluate situations in the moment, and consciously choose your response, rather than simply reacting. I find reminding myself of a triad is particularly valuable when I am confronted with a situation in which I am thrown into an internal state of resistance. For example, in learning to play saxophone, I found that frequently I would feel resistive when someone tried to give me information or pointers. Answering for myself the question is this person trying to GIVE/TAKE/or SHARE; then deciding to ASSIST, rather than BLOCK or BE NEUTRAL, often helped me to consciously overcome my mechanical resistance.

Having chosen your actions consciously from a triad of possibilities, you are in a much better position to evaluate the results. If things do not transpire as you had hoped, reflection on your choice will yield better results in the future, when a similar or parallel situation might arise.

One student I worked with had developed a very self-defeating pattern of doing a thing each time worse than the time before. For example, in practicing writing, the first letter in a row would be very good, the next not so good, and by the end of the row, it was terrible. Yet she insisted she wanted to continue to practice. Using the triad of BLOCK/ASSIST/NEUTRAL, I first tried to ASSIST her, by showing her the differences in how she wrote the letters. Her response to this ASSIST was to become surly and grouchy, but still she insisted she wanted to continue. The letters continued to get worse. I then tried the point of BLOCK, stopping her when she began to go wrong and directing her back to her model letter, to trace and study it. This action only increased her frustration and did not improve the performance. The remaining point was to BE NEUTRAL. I accomplished this by leaving her to practice alone, not giving any positive or negative feedback until she decided she was finished. After many private struggles, she did eventually produce a line of letters of equal or better quality when compared with the first.

What I learned from this was that being NEUTRAL and letting her struggle through it herself is usually the best course of action with this student, although of course I still use ASSIST and BLOCK at appropriate times.

I have summarized some of the ways that triads assist the thought process. The real proof, however, comes in trying them yourself and seeing how they work in action. Sections Two and Three will give you more specific ideas of how to get started using and teaching triads.

## ***Section Two: How to Teach Triads***

### **Chapter Four: Three Types of Triads**

Although all triads are actually expressions of the three forces involved in the manifestation of an event, project, or process, it is useful to think of triads as of three different types: CYCLE or process triads; triads of POSSIBILITIES or positions; and triads of ELEMENTS. A few examples of each should make this clear.

Triads of POSSIBILITIES name three alternatives in a given situation. At different times you may choose differently within the same triad as circumstances change. As you become aware of these possibilities you can choose more consciously what your response will be in any situation. To become balanced, you should learn to utilize all three possibilities with equal facility. Examples of this type of triad are- HELPFUL/ HARMFUL/ INDIFFERENT; GIVE/ TAKE/ SHARE; BLOCK / ASSIST/ NEUTRAL; DEFINITIVE/ ALLEGORICAL/ SYMBOLIC; PARTICIPATE/ REDIRECT/ LEAVE.

Triads of ELEMENTS define the three parts necessary for a thing to be complete or to function correctly. The example triad given in the last chapter for a boat: FLOAT/ GO/ STOP is one of this type of triad. The driving triads (page 77 )are also examples of this category, as are most triads made for individual projects.

CYCLE triads are those in which the three positions named are experienced again and again in a sort of rotation, which may or may not be sequential. For example, WORK/ PLAY/ PRACTICE, page 40. You move through these three activities throughout the day; the more evenly you distribute this rotation, the more balanced you become. Another CYCLE triad is that of INVESTIGATE/ ASSESS/and EXPRESS (page 84 ). This is a triad used in learning about something new, whether through experimentation, library research, or what have you. You can enter this CYCLE at any point, but to gain in your understanding of the subject at hand, you must pass through all three positions.



## **Chapter Five**

### **Teaching Triads: Three Phases and Three Ways of Learning**

Learning to use triads is a three-phase process. The goal of the first phase is to accustom the mind to thinking of three possibilities, three elements or three phases of a process. Through many examples of the use of triads in various settings, the mind begins to open up to this new way of seeing, so that eventually you automatically look for the third force, rather than thinking dualistically.

In this first phase, the teacher should try to show the children examples of three forces (elements, possibilities, phases) in as many situations and conditions as possible. The Basic Triads, page 32, are especially useful in the beginning. Many of these triads address common situations which arise throughout the day. It may be easier at first to take one triad a daily and try to find as many uses for it during the day as possible, discussing them as they come up. For example, the triad for approaching a dynamic, (page 46 ), could be discussed with the whole class and then used very overtly and discussed throughout the day. Another example would be to assist the children to evaluate their own papers, projects, etc, by using the triad of BETTER/ WORSE/ SAME (in comparison to their own previous efforts, not the other children's).

It may be useful to post the triad for the day on the chalkboard and then have short discussion periods at several points during the day, such as first thing in-the morning, just before lunch, after recess and before leaving for home. During these discussion periods children and teacher could bring up examples of when they used this or another triad or a situation when it could have been used, and how the outcome was changed or might have been changed by use of the triad. I often give children a small notebook for this purpose, in which they write the triad they are planning to use that day, then jot notes throughout the day

about incidents when they used that or other triads.

This same notebook can be used during phase two to write down the more specific and individual triads they will make during that phase. During this second phase, triads are put to more individual use. The students should be assisted in making individual triads for projects they are doing, triads which define the elements involved or phases to be gone through in a process. (An example, triads for building a doghouse, is given in the next chapter, Page 42 ).

Encourage the use of three answers to questions, three possible solutions to problems presented, even if at first they don't all seem equally plausible. The opening of the third space will develop into more reasonable answers with time.

In the third phase, the students begin to look at their own individual lives and futures through triads. Children should be encouraged to express their goals for themselves triadically. The advantage to a three-fold goal comes in the way in which the three parts assist and balance each other. When up against an obstacle in pursuing one goal, shifting the focus to another of the three goals will often give you a new perspective when you return to the goal that seemed blocked. Three goals provide a balancing force, preventing you from becoming one-sided or over-developed in one area and underdeveloped in others.

These three phases form a cycle, through which you continuously spiral, gaining a little each time you reenter a phase.

There are three ways of learning, through COMPETITION/ IMITATION/ and OSMOSIS.\*\* To thoroughly understand anything, you have to experience it from all three of these. Another way to look at this triad is as an example of ACTIVE/ PASSIVE/ NEUTRAL. COMPETITION is ACTIVE; IMITATION is PASSIVE; and OSMOSIS is NEUTRAL. If you have experienced something only from one or two of these positions, you

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\*\* This triad comes -from Gurdjieff, but I have been unable to find the exact reference.

do not know it in its fullness or totality. This of course applies to learning triads. It is necessary to provide opportunities for children to experience triads from all three of these perspectives in order for the tool to become fully effective for them.

The first teaching phase as outlined above is primarily a period of OSMOSIS, although some IMITATION may also occur. OSMOSIS consists of being around the use of triads, watching others use them, having examples shown or explained to you, discussing examples, thinking about triads for past or future situations.

IMITATION or PASSIVE comes into play more during the second phase in using basic triads in appropriate situations, reading or writing about triads, listening to explanations of how triads have been or could be used.

COMPETITION or ACTIVE enters into the second and third phases in using triads on the spot, making your own triads for situations or projects, using triads to figure out how to succeed against odds or opposing forces, or how to survive in a hostile environment (the streets of New York, for example, or a new work setting where you are perhaps an unwelcome participant in an already established structure and must make your value known and appreciated through your actions.)

A word about competition. Competition is not necessarily a bad thing. Of course we want children to learn to get along with each other and to be able to want everyone to win in the sense of everyone being able to achieve their own goals or get what they want out of life. However, it is unrealistic and, I believe, even dangerous, to try to eliminate or sublimate the competitive drive. There are many situations in life in which competition is necessary to survive or to succeed (two examples given above) and competition is a force that needs to be learned. The value of competition is that it assists the striving for excellence, the struggle to exceed even the best that you can do. When you compete, the effort to excel brings out of you even more than you believed you had. It is an illusion, a lower level of understanding, to think

of competition within the duality of winner and loser. Everyone who competes gains from the experience, learns and grows, and good sportsmanship should foster this understanding, as well as mutual respect and gratitude by the competitors toward each other. What is unhealthy about competition is if it fails to be balanced by a growing understanding of others' positions and of the ability to cooperate and work together, whenever this is possible and appropriate.

With an awareness of the three phases and an understanding of the uses of OSMOSIS/IMITATION/ and COMPETITION, it is possible to provide children with opportunities to experience triads through all three of these perspectives in order for the tool to become fully effective for them.

Spontaneous use of triads seems to come in three different areas - at first only occasionally, then more often.

1. In a crisis, in trying to solve a difficult problem, or when in a painful or desperate situation
2. When thinking, planning, to organize thoughts and process
3. Routine, daily use in appropriate situations

This last seems only to appear after all three phases have been experienced and triads have been used in all three modes – ACTIVE/ PASSIVE/ NEUTRAL or COMPETITION/IMITATION/ OSMOSIS. Eventually this level of use of triads effects your decision making by increasing your awareness of your own patterns and tendencies vs. what other possibilities exist, thus freeing you to choose more consciously and become more effective in reaching your own goals.

## Chapter Six

### Teaching Triads to Different Age Levels

No matter what age, everyone learning to use triads must go through the same three phases and the learning processes of IMITATION/ OSMOSIS/ COMPETITION, experiencing triads many times from the ACTIVE/ PASSIVE/ NEUTRAL positions. However, how these are applied varies from group to group and is influenced by age, developmental levels and experiences.

#### Pre-school

It is possible to introduce triads to very young children, even three and four year olds. The triads in the Basic Triads Chapter, page 32, are all appropriate for even the youngest children. WORK/ PLAY/ PRACTICE are concepts easily understood by preschoolers, and they enjoy the feeling of grown-up-ness that they get from talking about their WORK, as well as their PLAY and PRACTICE. Picking up the room after a free play period is a good example of WORK, and along with reminding the children that this is work, the teacher could elicit a triad from the children's own responses about how they will do this work, e.g. QUIETLY/ DIRECTLY/ and THOROUGHLY. Any triad appropriate to the chore at hand should be accepted, the point being that the children are forming a triad for this action. When the WORK is completed, the teacher should assist the children through questioning to review and assess their performance on the triad they formed beforehand.

Numerous opportunities arise throughout any school day - in class, on the playground, in the lunchroom, - to make use of triads such as HELPFUL/ HARMFUL/ INDIFFERENT and PARTICIPATE/ REDIRECT/ LEAVE. Children who are squabbling over how to play a game, for example, could be reminded of PARTICIPATE/ REDIRECT/ LEAVE, that a REDIRECT should be a group decision process based on suggestions, not force, and that the

option to LEAVE is also available. Conversely, children who tend to constantly LEAVE because they don't get their way can be guided in the means of REDIRECTING, or the value of PARTICIPATING with what is already established, whichever seems to be lacking.

Don't feel that this age group is too young for phase three, triads for individual goals and futures. Even preschool children can be asked to name three things they would like to do today, or three areas in which they would like to learn or improve their skills or abilities. Starting in first or second grade, this discussion can be extended to include sharing what they feel are their three biggest problems at school or what three areas of their school, home, or social life they would like to improve or change. These discussions can lead to making triads of possible solutions to problems that have been brought up.

### **Early Primary**

In the early primary grades when verbal articulation, planning and the use of written forms become increasingly of interest to the children, teachers can encourage more individual use of triads; triads specific to individual and group projects. At this age I have found that a personal triad notebook is something the children particularly enjoy and feel proud of. As mentioned before, it can be used in phase one to jot down the triad for the day and incidents during the day when the triad was used. Later, in phase two, it can be used to write their own individual triads for projects. This is particularly helpful, since it is very common, especially at first, to be able to remember only two of the points of a triad, even one you yourself made.

The Group Dynamics Triads, page 58, can be consciously brought into focus as appropriate occasions arise. For example, at this age it is possible for children to form their own agreements about BOSS/ PARTNER/ SERVANT or TEACHER/ STUDENT/ ASSOCIATE when working in groups on projects, research, or sharing what they have learned. These agreements and the ensuing interactions should be followed up by discussion

of how the interaction went in terms of the triad and the choices made in the initial agreement. Were the right leaders chosen? Did the leaders succeed at bringing the group to the original goal? Were the SERVANTS or STUDENTS respectful and assistive in their response to the BOSS/ TEACHER (chosen by them)? If PARTNERS, did they succeed in remaining PARTNERS or did someone become a leader or usurp the leadership role during the interaction?

Many of the Triads of Assessment, page 42, can be used more extensively with this group, such as CLOSER TO MY GOAL/ FURTHER/ or the SAME. It goes without saying that the children must first have defined their own goals for themselves before this triad is of any use. WORK/ PLAY/ PRACTICE can be used to discuss what type of activity the children are doing, and whether their behavior is appropriate to that activity. This triad can also be used to point out the need to respect the space of others engaged in an activity different from your own. For example, not to PLAY near to or in a way that would disrupt a group which is WORKING or PRACTICING.

As an example of triad making for a project, suppose a group of children are planning to build a doghouse. This kind of triad making often must start with brainstorming, listing all elements presented, then looking for the triad - subtriad schema within which they relate.

A possible set of triads follows:

1. Comfortable

- a. dry
- b. large enough for the dog to stand up and turn around
- c. door easy to get through

2. Materials we can get ourselves

- a. stuff brought from home
- b. stuff found at school

- c. stuff found on a walk around neighborhood
3. Buildable without outside assistance
- a. safety
  - b. availability of tools
  - c. our capacity to use the tools

This is of course only one possible solution to this project. Many others would work equally well, depending upon the individual needs, desires, and resources of those doing the project. Any three elements which are different from each other and cover what's necessary should be accepted.

Sometimes only one element is presented, such as the dog's comfort, and children will need to be prompted to think of what else is involved. How will they build it, of what materials, etc.? The teacher may have to add elements such as safety, tools, etc. It may seem that more than three elements have been suggested. Many of these will duplicate or overlap and can be restated as one part or as sub-parts of a major point.

### **Middle Grades and High-School**

In the middle grades, 4-6 or 8, self awareness and the ability to see another point of view are rapidly increasing, and the Triads for Understanding Self and Others, page 48, can be used to assist the children's gains in these areas.

It is especially important during this period to be aware of individual propensities and imbalances in the children's use of the ACTIVE/ PASSIVE/ NEUTRAL positions as well as their styles in terms of IMITATION/ OSMOSIS/ COMPETITION. This awareness should be used to provide opportunities for children to strengthen the areas which they tend to avoid or in which they are weak.



As children enter adolescence, these propensities can be discussed directly with them and they can be encouraged to choose experiences or projects which will strengthen their weak areas.

At the junior high and high school levels, many meaningful discussions can be based on the Nine Points, page 66 , and the World View Triads, page 85. Of course, if this is their first exposure to triads, the Basic Triads should also be introduced and all three phases gone through. It is particularly important at this age to relate everything to the student's own goals, desires, and interests. If they can see that this tool will help them achieve their own aims, they will embrace it. It is also vital to assist adolescents to become aware of their propensities and weak areas so that they can gain the experiences needed to become more balanced, and open up all possible ways of interacting with life situations.

## Chapter Seven

### Three and Other Numbers in Literature and Various Cultures

Thinking triadically is not something, which comes naturally. Yet strangely, we are surrounded by examples of three-part structure, from the atom as composed of electron, proton, and neutron, to the Holy Trinities of Christianity and many other religions. Three as a symbol of completeness appears in nearly every aspect of our lives - our language (past, present, and future tenses; three genders; 1st, 2nd and 3rd persons; etc.) ; government (3 branches of government) ; science (division of material world into animal, vegetable and mineral; 3 states of matter - solid, liquid, and gas); tri-colored traffic lights; tri- colored flags of many countries; three parts used in giving the date (month, day and year); the list could go on and on.

According to Christian symbolism, three represents completeness, "divine perfection" as exemplified by the three-part nature of God (Father, Son and Holy Spirit) and the three-fold nature of man (body, soul, and spirit)[1]. Two, on the other hand, represents division or difference, which, though possibly for good or evil, often takes the qualities of opposition or enmity [2]. As two may represent the apparent completeness of a pair, it can just as easily represent or become conflict or opposition. Think of how frequently this takes place between two friends, for example, or two children who one moment love each other and the next are quarrelling bitterly.

The three-fold deity is not exclusive to Christian tradition; many other cultures, including the Taoist, Hindu, Buddhist, and Babylonian, honor three deities or a trinity of godhead.

Many modern psychologists and -philosophers have used three patterning or triads to express their ideas. Robert Sternberg, Professor of Psychology and Education at Yale, has written several books which incorporate triadic concepts. In The Triangle of Love he presents a triadic model of the nature of love - intimacy, passion, and commitment. He asserts that this

model of the three elements of love is supported by evidence from all cultures and times, and that "many other accounts of love seem to boil down to something similar." [3]

In The Triarchic Mind he offers a "new theory of human intelligence" in which he uses several different triads to describe his point of view; for example, that three types of intelligence are analytical (critical), synthetic (creative) , and practical; and that there are three aspects of intelligence - as it interplays with one's internal world, with one's experience, and with one's external world. [4]

Several of Freud's most important ideas were expressed in triadic form. For example, his division of levels of consciousness into conscious, preconscious, and unconscious, and his division of the parts of our psyche into what he called the "I," the "It," and the "Over-I" or "Upper-I". (These have generally been translated into English as ego, id, and super-ego, but Freud originally described them using common pronouns.) [5] These three parts, by the way, correlate closely with the Adult, Child, and Parent "egos" described by Eric Berne in Games People Play and other books on transactional analysis.

G. I. Gurdjieff was a Russian philosopher, trained in the esoteric mystical traditions of the Far East, who in the early 1900's brought his teachings to Europe and America, attracting many students to his institute in Paris. He stated that the law of three is "the first fundamental law of the universe." According to this law, every action, every phenomenon in all worlds without exception is the result of a simultaneous action of three forces - the positive, the negative and the neutralizing."[6]

Oscar Ichazo, founder of the Arica Institute in New York, studied under the masters of many of the same traditions which influenced Gurdjieff. He came to America from Chile in the early 1970's and gave a series of lectures to introduce his philosophy of the evolution of human reasoning and escape from the bondage of our egos. In the book, Between Metaphysics and Protoanalysis, which is a transcription of several of these lectures, he gives an

account of the evolution of human reasoning, naming three historical phases of the development of rational thought - Aristotelian Logic; Dialectics, which arose as a reflection of the changes begun during the Renaissance; and a third, which he calls trialectics.[7]

Each of these is defined by three major premises.

The Montessori method of teaching uses a cycle triad for introducing new material, which they call the three period lesson. First the material is demonstrated for the child; second, the teacher asks the child to show her the objects as they are named; third, the teacher asks the child, what is this?, so that the child then has to come up with the terms from the material.[8]

There is also a cycle triad describing the functions of the Montessori teacher, or director/directress, as they are called.

1. Provide/revise the specially prepared environment.
2. Introduce appropriate materials to the child - "link the child to the environment."
3. Step back and observe, returning to 1 and 2 as observations dictate the needs of the child. [9]

According to at least one source, even the human body works on a three-fold cycle, dividing the 24-hour day into three 8-hour sections. Harvey Diamond, in a book called Fit For Life, a bestseller which was popularized as a diet book, but actually describes a system for maintaining good health called Natural Hygiene, describes this triadic cycle of body functions. From noon to 8 PM, eating and digestion; 8 PM to 4 AM, absorption and assimilation; 4 AM to noon, elimination. He claims that by learning to observe this cycle in your eating habits, you gain energy and vitality. [10]

Certain numbers other than three are extremely important pattern numbers in other cultures. An example is the extensive ritual use of four in American Indian culture. Some interesting contrasts to our use of three are their starting call for a race, "1, 2, 3, 4, go!" and the

announcing call of the gods being always a repetition of four calls [11] (as compared with the Christian "Holy, Holy, Holy").

However, the Indian culture also contains some striking examples of three completeness, such as their conception of man's nature consisting of body, mind and spiritual parts. The deity world of the Navajo consists of deities of three types - The Persuadable (with good motives), The Undependable (possibly mischievous) , and the Unpersuadable (evil). [12]

They also recognize the existence of "Beings between good and evil," considered in their mythology as "between that which gives pleasure and that which gives pain." [13]

The Chinese and Babylonians also used four extensively in their ritual and symbolism. Four appears to be representative of a sort of completeness, e.g. the four points of the compass, four seasons, four elements (fire, air, water, earth). In the Christian tradition this is thought of as material completeness, creation, [14] or cosmic order. [15] It is worth noting, however, that both Taoist and Babylonian religions worship a triad of deities, supporting the idea that three represents a different sort of completeness than four.

Alan Dundes, Professor of Anthropology and Folklore at U.C. Berkeley, and author of Interpreting Folklore, in the chapter entitled "The Number Three in American Culture," suggests that three-categorization, so pervasive in our Western culture, may be merely a symptom of cultural conditioning, rather than a reflection of objective reality. He cites the many examples of three in American folklore and daily ritual and infers that scientists, philosophers and the like who use three- categorization are doing so under the influence of their culture, rather than giving an objective description. [16] He fails, however, to offer any examples of alternative categorization schemes, and so his accusation falls a bit flat. He is also unable to provide an explanation of where this symbolism of three began, and although his focus is clearly on American culture, he nevertheless gives examples which are far more widespread than simply American.

(C.G.) "Jung held that number itself could be defined psychologically as 'an archetype of order' which has become conscious and natural numbers therefore had a archetypal character. He took the view that they were as much found as invented ... Man invented them only in so far as he became aware of their existence." [17]

Certain triads do seem to have a sort of universal nature, similar to the universal nature of certain symbols and archetypes described by Jung. It is interesting, for example, that Sternberg found the same three elements of love across many different cultures and time periods.

In The Triarchic Mind, Sternberg describes a triad of adaptation, shaping, and selection, as three ways of interacting with the environment. [18] This triad is remarkable similar to one of the most basic triads we've discovered: PARTICIPATE/ REDIRECT/ LEAVE. By Adaptation, Sternberg means forming your behavior to the environment, fitting into what is ongoing. This correlates with our point of PARTICIPATE. Sternberg's Shaping refers to taking actions to change or modify the environment or the nature of the interaction with others, which we call REDIRECT. Selection is the word Sternberg uses for choosing what interactions to remain involved with, selecting by eliminating those which are not satisfying or undesirable. This correlates with the LEAVE point of our triad. The similarity in the description of these two triads seems to support the notion of their having been "discovered," rather than invented, both by Sternberg and by us. I also came across this triad once in talking with a fellow teacher. When I described the triad to her, she responded that when she was a young girl, her father had expressed something very similar. He told her if you like what's going on, stay with it; if you don't like it, try to change it; if you can't change it, get away from it.

There is a very interesting correlation in the fact that Rudolph Steiner (Austrian, 1861-1925) and Oscar Ichazo (Chilean, 1935) in forming their separate philosophies (Steiner-

anthroposophy and the Waldorf Schools, Ichazo - trialectics and the Arica Institute) arrived at very similar triads of the stages of child development.

Steiner describes three 7-year stages as first physical development, through doing or will; then "etheric" development or development of feeling; and third, during adolescence, "astral" development or intellectual learning. These three stages are capped at about age 21 by the emergence of "the individual self." [19]

Ichazo describes the same stages, although naming them differently: first the development of the physical body, through empathic reasoning; then the emotional body, which reasons analogically; and during adolescence, the intellectual, with analytical reasoning. He sees these three as ultimately becoming overlaid by cultural conditioning or "social judgement" [20] as opposed to Steiner's view of the emergence of a true individual at the close of adolescence. But their descriptions of the three stages are remarkably similar.

Steiner's background was in theosophy and Rosicrucianism. Ichazo was taught by Brazilian mystics in the traditions of Eastern occult practices. Granted, Theosophy was heavily influenced by Buddhism. Were they perhaps separately influenced by the same roots? Or did they individually "discover" these basic triads of development?

To discover the origin of the use of the three pattern is beyond the scope and actually beside the point of this manual. It is evident that three is a pervasive symbol, whatever its origin. But whether one concludes that three is actually the essential basis of manifestation or the way we see things due to our culture, or even if one reaches no conclusion on this issue; what remains of importance are these questions: Does thinking in triads work? Do triads help make thinking clearer and more direct? Do they assist in more conscious choice making and better evaluation of the results of choices?

By trying out the triads and exercises in the remainder of this manual, you will find your own answers to these questions.

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## ***Section Three: Descriptions of Triads and Exercises***

### **Chapter Eight: Basic Triads**

These triads are basic in that they apply to situations which come up numerous times throughout the day in all kinds of settings. These triads will get you started thinking in three's and seeing how using a triad helps in basic assessing and decision making.

These are the triads to start with, no matter what age, from pre- school up to adults. A good approach is to pick one and stick with it for a day or several days, trying to find as many examples as possible of its use in your interactions. Eventually you will find that the basic triads become an automatic part of your thought and responses.

## ***DESCRIBE/ COMPARE/ EVALUATE***

This triad may be THE most important triad for training the mind to think in this new way. This triad alone, if used daily, will strengthen anyone's thinking abilities enormously, and empower him or her in all their choices. The use of this triad automatically leads you to more awareness of your life and choices. It also trains the mind to see the relationships between forces and events, a type of thinking that seems particularly absent in much of modern society.

**DESCRIBE.** Try to be as thorough as possible; describe from as many different points of view as you can. Describe the obvious, surface elements, then go deeper, describe what's beneath the surface. For example, if you are describing a person, first describe their physical features, what they're wearing, etc. Then look deeper –what do you see in their expression? What can you say about their movements, their posture, their cultural background, the amount of pain they've experienced in their life, how they make a living, their level of comfort or discomfort in their present situation? Keep reaching for deeper levels – go as deep as you possibly can.

**COMPARE.** Any statement that uses more, less, better, worse, sooner, later, or other such comparative words is comparison, rather than description. Comparison also encompasses the past, present, and future. Comparison can be made on the basis of such triads as **BETTER/ WORSE/ SAME; CLOSER TO MY GOAL/ FURTHER FROM MY GOAL/ NO CHANGE; ASCENDING/ DESCENDING/ STAYING LEVEL**, or any other appropriate triad of assessment. Sometimes it is helpful to define a scale and rate whatever you are describing now, and then give a rating for how it was at some time previous. For example, on a scale of 1-10, 10 being the best you've ever felt and 1 being the worst, what number rating would you give your present feelings? What rating would you have given them yesterday? Last week or last year?

EVALUATE. As used in this triad, EVALUATE means to state the value of whatever has been described and compared, either its value to yourself, or to someone else who is connected to the subject. It could even be the value to the world or to society at large. This is often the hardest point for people to do at first. As you attempt to make a statement of value, listen to see if you are reverting to description or comparison. Evaluation consists of a statement of what the value of something is, to you or to someone else. It can also mean extrapolating into the future to see what value could come from a continuation of the present situation, condition or trend. A point about the use of EVALUATION in the school and job setting. Most often, evaluation as used in these settings is a statement of the value of the work done from the point of view of the system, whether that system is the school or the job environment. When you get an “A” in school or a commendation at the job, this is the system’s statement of your work’s value to the system. It may have little or nothing to do with the value of that work to yourself. Although it is definitely important to know where you stand in the assessment of the system you are a part of, it is at least as important to ask yourself, what is the value of this to my own life and goals?

To truly and thoroughly DESCRIBE a thing, a person, a relationship, an interaction, is at the very least a mind strengthening exercise. But if you go on, and COMPARE what has been described, in at least several different ways, and finally EVALUATE, you have given yourself a scope and view that will automatically lead to empowerment in all areas of your life. A half-hour each morning spent practicing this triad on various aspects of your life and involvements will pay off in greater awareness and clarity in all aspects of your life.

## ***PARTICIPATE/ REDIRECT/ LEAVE***

This is one of the most basic and important triads. It describes what your three possibilities are in any interaction. This triad represents what amounts to basic human rights in any interaction. The problem is that in most cases people are not consciously aware of the existence of this triad, and therefore not only do not utilize all three possibilities themselves, but also unconsciously deny these rights to others. The denial of the basic right to these options ultimately leads to violence of one sort or another, whether actual physical violence, or internal violence in the form of repression of the human spirit and psyche.

Because these possibilities are not taught, most people tend to utilize only two, and usually fail to use or even recognize the third. Which two you favor in most cases is determined by your early childhood programming, imitating the way your parents interact. You can see by a looking at your own and other people's patterns, which point is being overlooked. For example, those who lack the understanding of REDIRECT tend to get stuck in situations they don't like but just hang in there anyway, until things become truly unbearable, at which point they either explode (a usually ineffective REDIRECT attempt), or run away (LEAVE); or they LEAVE right away, as soon as the going gets the least bit rough or uncomfortable. Those who favor the REDIRECT/LEAVE points are the ones who interrupt with questions before hearing the full explanation, enter a game already in progress and want to change the rules or format right away, etc.

Children, since they are dependent on the adults around them, very often are in situations which they cannot LEAVE, i.e. school, family, etc., and it is particularly important for teachers and parents to be sensitive to their needs within this triad and help them REDIRECT when appropriate, advocating for them if necessary, or even arranging a LEAVE if that seems the best or only alternative.

If forced to remain in a situation they find intolerable, and unable to REDIRECT or LEAVE, children will "LEAVE" to a fantasy world or by "blinking out," or develop "behavior problems" in a misguided attempt to REDIRECT. It is important to help children to learn to use all three possibilities when appropriate, and to keep all three choices open to them.

As they get older, it is good to discuss how to protect these options by avoiding making agreements or entering into situations in which one or another of these possibilities is lost. Some examples of this would be a job situation in which suggestions for change or improvement are not accepted or encouraged; or a boyfriend-girlfriend relationship (or later marriage) in which one or both partners expect undivided attention and devotion from the other, thus limiting the LEAVE possibility (a LEAVE is not necessarily permanent - even getting away for a day or a few days is a LEAVE).

Exercises:

A. To acquaint very young children with the triad of PARTICIPATE/ REDIRECT/LEAVE and teach them the meaning of the words, play this game:

Sit in a circle. Use a foam ball or other soft ball to toss or roll between those in the circle. Whoever catches the ball must say either PARTICIPATE", "REDIRECT", or "LEAVE." If "PARTICIPATE," then s/he continues the same action (throwing or rolling the ball to another person). If "REDIRECT" s/he initiates a different action (handing it to another person, getting up and moving to another spot, then rolling it, etc. - any action with the ball which involves another person and is not dangerous). If "LEAVE" s/he leaves the circle and goes to do something else, (leaving the ball behind) without disturbing those who are still in the game. If the children seem too timid to try a REDIRECT or a LEAVE, the teacher can demonstrate these two with her own actions so that they see that these possibilities are open to them. Follow up this game with discussions during the day of the uses of PARTICIPATE/

REDIRECT/ and LEAVE in actual interactions with each other.

Note: if someone wants to return to the game after LEAVING, this is a good opportunity to use the triad for Approaching a Dynamic ( page 46)

B. This is for older students and adults. Break the group up into small discussion groups of four or five people.

1. Each person takes a turn and tells which of the three - PARTICIPATE/ REDIRECT/ LEAVE - they have the most difficulty with.

2. Go around the circle again, and this time each person describes a situation in which it would be appropriate for them to use that position which they had chosen as being difficult for them, telling how they would handle this situation if they could shift into this position at will. If a person is having difficulty coming up with an example, the others can help. Or, they can describe a situation from the past which they would like to have handled differently in light of knowing about these three positions. If there is enough time, each group could choose one of the situations discussed and role-play the results of the discussion for the rest of the class.

## ***GIVE/ TAKE/ SHARE***

## ***BLOCK/ ASSIST/ NEUTRAL***

This pair of related triads is among the most basic and most immediately useful. It is also one that assists with more conscious interacting, breaking from conditioned responses.

Whenever someone approaches you, ask yourself, is this force coming to GIVE/to TAKE/or to SHARE? You will get some kind of immediate gut response, which will either be confirmed by subsequent actions, or shown to be off base. Once you've given this initial answer to yourself, ask yourself, am I going to BLOCK/ASSIST/or remain NEUTRAL?

In this way, the decision for your response is chosen based on the information gained from answering the first question, and you have the opportunity to decide to ASSIST, for example, because you've determined that this person wants to TAKE, you have what they want and are willing to GIVE it. Or, you decide to BLOCK, because although the person is approaching all smiles and sweetness, you perceive that s/he is there to TAKE and you do not want to GIVE. Or you decide to remain NEUTRAL in order to watch longer before making a decision. These are just examples.

What these two triads do is to give you more power by having consciously assessed what the other person's intentions are and by having consciously chosen your responses. A conscious force always has an advantage over an unconscious force. It is also possible to change your position during the interaction if you see by the other person's actions that your first assessment was incorrect, or if you are persuaded by events to change your decision, or if the interaction starts to move into another point on the first triad.

These triads can be introduced to very young children, even first graders, either by asking them the questions during an interaction with them or one you observe them in, or by talking about situations afterwards. For example, you could ask, was that person trying to

GIVE to you/ TAKE from you/ or SHARE with you? Did you ASSIST/BLOCK/or DO NOTHING? This can lead into discussions about what other's motives are, how they may at times be other than they appear on the surface, and also how we react sometimes against our best interests, for example, BLOCKING someone who is trying to GIVE us assistance. If used during an interaction, it can help children become more aware in the moment, of what an interaction consists and how they are responding. Sometimes this awareness will lead to their choosing a different, more appropriate response.

Exercise:

Break up into small groups. One person leaves the circle or small group and decides privately on an action toward another person in the group, which s/he thinks, is either GIVE/TAKE/or SHARE. (You may want to set some ground rules as to what kinds of actions will not be permitted.) The designated person then returns to the small group, goes up to the person of their choice, and does the chosen action (without saying which they think it is). At this point, the receiver of the action tells which they think the action was - GIVE/ TAKE/ or SHARE.

They then silently decide whether to BLOCK/ASSIST/ or be NEUTRAL, and carry out their response. This is followed by discussion of how the others saw the action and response in terms of the two triads. Did the receiver interpret the action the way it was intended? Was the response effective as it had been intended?

Do several of these role-plays, discussing the results each time. Try to be subtle in choosing the initial actions. The ones that are tricky are those that appear to be one thing but are actually another.



## ***WORK/ PLAY/ PRACTICE***

This is an extremely basic and important triad. It is another one, like PARTICIPATE/ REDIRECT/ LEAVE, which showed me my third force blindness. (see Personal Statement, page 3 ). When we first discovered this triad, I had difficulty understanding the meaning of PRACTICE. Of course, I know what practice means, like practicing the piano, but I realized that I approached everything in life either as WORK or PLAY (and mostly WORK at that).

As I searched my own memory and thought of my observations of others, I came to a better understanding of PRACTICE by remembering examples of individuals who were caught in the PRACTICE/PLAY duality, and did not understand that WORK is different.

One who stood out vividly in my mind was a guitar player, extremely talented, who, although a professional musician, never took his WORK seriously. He was habitually late, held a carefree attitude toward those he worked for and with, and even while performing would frequently try out new ideas in the midst of a song, often at inappropriate moments. When confronted on any of these behaviors, his reply invariable was, "Aw, you're making this too much like work!"

He did not see that this was WORK, and as such was different from either PRACTICE or PLAY, and needed a more serious approach. By thinking about his inability to understand WORK, compared to my lack of understanding of PRACTICE, I came to a fuller comprehension of the three different activities.

I realized that the essential ingredient of PRACTICE is that failure is permitted; in fact that experimentation - stretching one's neck out, is a vital element of PRACTICE, as compared to WORK, which by definition, contains some negative consequence for not succeeding. In PRACTICE, there must be no consequences for failure other than your own recognition of it so that future actions can be modified accordingly.

This seems to be an important downfall of the schools in general. School should be

almost 100% PRACTICE; after all, learning is PRACTICE, not WORK. There should be no negative consequences in school other than those attached to destructive or anti-social behavior. Yet, as John Holt so clearly described in How Children Fail, children are so terrified of failure in school that they develop all sorts of traits which are counterproductive to real learning, but which enable them to pick up by cues what the "correct" responses should be. Even the use of the word "schoolwork" is a linguistic barrier to the freedom to make mistakes, for WORK is something in which mistakes are going to cost you.

Needless to say, with my propensity for the WORK/PLAY duality, I was an excellent student in school, but never learned to experiment, and developed a phobia of sticking my neck out in any situation.

An understanding of this triad on the part of teachers and parents and an early introduction of it to children could greatly ameliorate this difficulty and help free children to become more effective learners.

#### Exercise

After discussing with the students the meaning of WORK/PLAY/ PRACTICE, have them give examples of each from their daily lives. Discuss with them the balance of the three activities in their lives, their parents' lives, their older and younger brothers' and sisters' lives, etc. Is there a different balance of activities at different times in your life? Do they feel that they have the right balance for themselves? Are there others (parents, grandparents, etc.) who they feel do or do not have a good balance of the three activities in their lives? How could they redirect their schedules to bring about a better balance if they feel it is not the best balance for them now? This could also lead to discussions of how the balance changes at different stages of life. Should it?

## *Triads of Assessment*

***HELPFUL/ HARMFUL/ INDIFFERENT***  
***(HELP/ HINDER/ or LEAVE ALONE)***  
***CLOSER TO MY GOAL/ FURTHER FROM MY GOAL/ NO CHANGE***  
***ASCENDING/ DESCENDING/ STAYING LEVEL***  
***BETTER/ WORSE/ SAME***  
***INCREASE/ DECREASE/ STABILIZE***

This is a group of related triads that can be used in various situations to help assess your progress, your condition, or the effect of various actions or interactions. All of these assessments are relative to your own goals or statements of what you want. However, they can also be used by teachers in making evaluation of students' progress, parents in evaluating children's decisions or plans, and in helping the children to do the same.

HELPFUL/ HARMFUL/ INDIFFERENT can be used to assist in making choices among various courses of action possible, by asking yourself whether the proposed action will HELP/ HINDER/ or HAVE NO EFFECT on your goals or well being. This is also a useful triad when someone is in resistance to receiving assistance. Sometimes just by answering the question, am I trying to HELP you, HINDER you or LEAVE you ALONE? (or do you want me to HELP, HINDER or LEAVE you ALONE?), the person's attitude and response may change and become assistive.

CLOSER TO MY GOAL/FURTHER/or NO CHANGE is very useful for stepping back from a project or involvement and making an overall assessment of where you stand. It can also be used, like HELPFUL/ HARMFUL/ INDIFFERENT to evaluate proposed actions or plans - will this plan or involvement bring me CLOSER TO MY GOAL/ FURTHER/or make NO CHANGE in where I stand?

ASCENDING/ DESCENDING/ STAYING LEVEL and BETTER/ WORSE/ SAME

are very similar. The first is more useful for assessing an ongoing involvement such as a conversation or a relationship. The second is useful for making comparisons to previous results or an earlier condition.

INCREASE/ DECREASE/or STABILIZE is used to decide in what direction you want an interaction or involvement to move, then taking appropriate steps to bring about the INCREASE/ DECREASE/ or STABILIZATION. This triad is often used after using one of the others for assessing where you are, how far you've come, or where you're headed - then you decide to INCREASE/ DECREASE/or STABILIZE what's ongoing or what has brought you this far.

For example, a teacher decided that having her students give oral book reports rather than written ones is causing their reading comprehension and retention to get BETTER, so she decided to INCREASE the oral reports and DECREASE the written ones.

## ***FRIEND/ ENEMY/ STRANGER***

The value of this very basic triad is in making you more consciously aware of your behavior toward others and theirs toward you. Often people do not want to acknowledge ENEMY behavior as such, especially if that behavior is coming from a relative or someone close to them, someone they feel should be a FRIEND. Basically, a FRIEND is someone who is for you, who wants you to get what you want, who is willing to help you get it. An ENEMY is someone who is in some way actively preventing you from getting what you want. A STRANGER is uninvolved and wants no connection with you. (Compare this to HELPFUL/ HARMFUL/ INDIFFERENT.)

It is important to realize that these terms refer to a person's behavior, and therefore can change. However, a pattern of behavior or "track record.," usually develops which puts a person generally into one of these positions in their relating to you.

With young children, this triad can be used to point out when they are behaving as an ENEMY toward someone they want to be FRIENDS with; or ignoring them, taking the STRANGER position, when they really are not strangers and should acknowledge the other child. It can also be used in conjunction with GIVE/ TAKE/ SHARE and HELPFUL/ HARMFUL/ INDIFFERENT to help them become more aware of the possibility that someone who approaches, looking and acting like a STRANGER or FRIEND may in fact be in the ENEMY position, wanting to TAKE from them or to HARM them.

Older children and adults can discuss what it means to them to be a FRIEND - what are the elements of friendship? (See also the Three Relationships, P. 79. ) Who do they see as ENEMIES? The answers to this may run a large gamut from, for example, my brother when he swipes my socks, all the way to, the drug dealers who might shoot me on the way to school. How can they change or eliminate ENEMY behavior in those who should be

FRIENDS, and even more important, how can they protect themselves from any actual dangerous ENEMIES that may exist in their environment?

Conscious acknowledgement of who their ENEMIES are may lead them to seek assistance or formulate better plans for avoiding or defending against these ENEMIES. In group discussion, plans or ideas may be formed which one individual alone could not have thought of.

Can a FRIEND or ENEMY become a STRANGER? This is interesting fuel for thought and discussion. Is it possible for a relationship to revert back to the level of STRANGERS once another relationship has been established?

This triad helps you become more aware of your behavior toward others, as well as theirs toward you, helping you fit your actions more closely to your desired goals and helping you understand where others are coming from. (See also FAIRNESS/ WAR/ MACHINE, page 87. )

### *Triad of Responses When Approaching a Dynamic*

A dynamic is any involvement, action, or interaction, whether between two or more people, or just one person alone, such as reading, writing, meditating, etc. Children must first be taught to recognize, and then to respect, dynamics of all kinds, learning that there is a triad of possible responses when they approach a dynamic.

When approaching a dynamic, the person approaching should wait at the edge of the area where the dynamic is taking place, within eye view of the participants, but not so close as to disrupt their involvement. Those involved should then signal one of three options - COME IN/ WAIT (an opening will happen soon, when you can join us) / or GO AWAY.

Children need to be taught that all of these three options are equally OK and none of them is directly for or against them personally. Any dynamic is changed automatically by the entry of another person (force). At times the dynamic will be changed in such a way that the original involvement cannot come to fruition. It is at these times that the approaching person is asked to GO AWAY. This is not meant personally - it simply means that the participants need to maintain this particular grouping in order to complete what they started out to achieve or exchange.

Children who are taught to respect and approach dynamics in this way must also be given the right to have their dynamics approached by adults and other children with the same respect. For this to work, they need to learn to use the triad of responses towards those who approach them, as well as obey the signals of the triad when they are approaching a dynamic.

The right of exclusion always takes precedence. That is, if one person in a dynamic wants the approaching person to COME IN, but another person in the dynamic wants him/her to GO AWAY, the approaching person must GO AWAY. But this exclusion is only for the particular dynamic in progress, so as to permit it to reach its fruition as it is presently formed.

It must be understood, agreed, and acted upon that no one is permanently or consistently excluded. Space must be made to include a person who has been excluded from one dynamic in other dynamics at other times. Children need guidance in learning the balance between respect for their dynamics, the right to participate when and with whom they choose and their responsibility to be fair to others in their class, community, and family. This is not easy and involves the development of understanding the other's point of view as well as one's own.



## **Chapter Nine: Triads That Assist in Understanding Self and Others**

These triads are particularly helpful in understanding individual propensities, strengths and weaknesses. They are equally helpful in increasing your understanding of others and in increasing your own self-awareness.

The triads in this group are useful to the teacher in understanding why certain children respond one way and others in other ways. These are not meant to type the children. They are to point out tendencies, so that behavior becomes more comprehensible, and with this understanding, teachers can help guide children in growing to become more balanced.

Older children can discuss these triads and gain in self-awareness, learning to plan their own experiences and projects to take advantage of their own strengths as well as to grow in their weaker areas.

These triads are also helpful in shedding light on certain inner processes which can make productive interactions (and learning) difficult or impossible.

The Nine Points, page 66, covered under Triads for Mental Health, are also helpful in increasing understanding and self-awareness.

## *ACTIVE/ PASSIVE/ NEUTRAL*

This triad describes the three forces which express themselves through us as three ways of interacting with life. ACTIVE is acting on the environment and other people, having an effect.

PASSIVE is receptive, absorbing and giving feedback.

NEUTRAL neither acts nor receives. It observes, but is unaffected and uninfluenced by other forces and events.

Each of these is appropriate at different times, and ideally you would be able to switch to any of the three according to circumstances. However, each person has a strong leaning toward one of these forces over the other two and will tend to take that position most often. Many times, however, young children seem to be more flexible and more able to move within the three forces. Children can be gently led to experience the positions with which they are less familiar. A very PASSIVE child, for example, can be helped to take an ACTIVE role by being given leadership in an area in which s/he is very comfortable or knowledgeable.

At adolescence when the person is faced with new confusions and pressures from within and without, and at the same time begins to take more responsibility for self and direction, the natural propensity for one force tends to become much stronger. The adolescent uses the one force which is most comfortable far more than the other two and often has a lot of trouble making shifts to the other forces. Cultural conditioning plays a part in this as well. Girls who happen to be naturally PASSIVE or NEUTRAL are culturally reinforced in this and usually not helped to learn to use the ACTIVE force. Girls who naturally gravitate toward the ACTIVE force often receive negative feedback. Boys, on the other hand, are more encouraged to take an ACTIVE role, and so even those who are naturally more NEUTRAL or PASSIVE usually develop some access to the ACTIVE force. However, many naturally

ACTIVE boys have difficulty taking the PASSIVE or NEUTRAL position since this has not been encouraged or developed.

For these reasons, it is extremely important to help adolescents learn to gain access to all three forces, by giving them assignments or challenges which require use of the force(s) with which they are less familiar or which they tend to avoid. These challenges are difficult to meet, but with the right encouragement, will open up for them access to a more balanced and fuller range of ways to relate to life.

Exercises:

1. To build ACTIVE force in a primarily PASSIVE or NEUTRAL person, put that person in charge of some project, team effort or individual, in which s/he cannot succeed simply by following the previous efforts of others - the road must be formed or discovered. For example, a challenge in science, a question or problem which requires an ACTIVE plan or process to resolve - not something which can be answered in books or by asking someone else. If put as a leader of a team, the other team members should be PASSIVE or NEUTRAL types, since a naturally ACTIVE team member would simply usurp the leadership and let the chosen leader return to his/her more usual force.

2. To build PASSIVE in a primarily ACTIVE or NEUTRAL person, have him/her listen to a report, story, etc. , then retell it to another person as closely as possible to the original. Or have him/her carry out a project by following exactly the instructions of someone else. (Perhaps the one struggling to learn ACTIVE)

3. To build NEUTRAL force in those who have difficulty with it, do observation exercises such as watching a short skit or piece of action and trying to report as many details as possible accurately. Or give the person a mediator position in a debate or discussion in which s/he has a strong opinion and let him/her exercise the capacity to remain uninvolved, restating the various points equally and doing a good, NEUTRAL moderator's job.

## ***CONTROL/ ALTER/ INFLUENCE***

This triad describes another way to look at how you and others interact with life. These three ways of effecting others are all useful and appropriate at different times. However, like so many other triads, we tend to utilize one more than the others, whether through natural propensity or imitation of our role models when growing up.

CONTROL is rather like a power force - it maintains conditions and situations by stopping or holding out what it doesn't want, or keeping going what it does want. CONTROL can be a stilling force at times, but it can also be an important regulating force when used appropriately.

ALTER is the force of change, redirecting, innovating, shifting things around; in its highest form it is transformation.

INFLUENCE has a slow, gradual effect, but like the dripping water on a rock over the ages, it is incessant and if it is not gotten away from, it will create an effect. INFLUENCE is the softest but also in many ways the strongest of these three. Because it is so subtle, it does not usually bring about resistance and therefore can have a deep effect.

## ***REAL MOTION/ ARTIFICIAL MOTION / STOPPED MOTION***

These refer to mental motion as well as actual physical motion.

REAL MOTION is happening when the thought and actions are direct and definitely related to what is going on; they make sense and are connected.

ARTIFICIAL MOTION is excess or unrelated movement, thought and speech. ARTIFICIAL MOTION often looks fake or pretended. Speech when in ARTIFICIAL MOTION is disconnected from what is actually going on - excess verbiage, questions that don't lead to any point, or that have already been answered, etc. Thought in this state is distracted, convoluted, not to the point.

STOPPED MOTION is a state of internal blocking or shutting down. In this state, the person may feel paralyzed and unable to make a move. Thought is also blocked and there seems to be a refusal or inability to see even the obvious.

ARTIFICIAL MOTION and STOPPED MOTION develop in childhood as defense mechanisms for situations in which the child is faced with fear or impotence to effect the environment and at the same time cannot escape. Either one or both of these may develop. They serve a protective purpose in childhood, which would probably never be necessary if the child were taught triads such as PARTICIPATE/REDIRECT/ LEAVE at an early age, and given the opportunity to learn to use and take advantage of all three options.

However, not all children are so fortunate and many have to face difficult or seemingly impossible odds against growing up whole and balanced. This triad is one which helps the teacher see the defense mechanism that may have developed and by seeing it, may be able to help the child move back toward REAL MOTION. Older children (and adults), made aware of this triad, can see ARTIFICIAL and STOPPED MOTION in themselves and others, become aware of the ineffectiveness of this defense to create real change, and with the

help of other triads, learn ways to make real changes in their environment, thus becoming less fearful and more in charge of their own destinies.

How do you overcome ARTIFICIAL MOTION and STOPPED MOTION and get into REAL MOTION? First it is necessary to recognize what it is, and to realize that this is not an effective state to achieve what you want. It is a defense mechanism and as such makes you feel protected, but you cannot do anything about your situation in reality from these states, so in actuality you are ineffective. Once this is realized, each individual will find ways to break out of the unproductive state and reconnect with the reality around them.

For people in STOPPED MOTION, it is often necessary to get into physical movement to break the mental block. Walking, running, hammering, etc. may help.

Those in ARTIFICIAL MOTION need to be confronted with their lack of connection and brought back to the point through logical dialogue and a refusal to allow them to stray from the pertinent points. Of course, it is necessary to confront whatever it is that has triggered the state in the first place. What are you afraid of? Is there a real danger? How can you escape this danger? If there is no real threat, just realizing that you are safe and not under threat helps get you out of the blocked state. These kind of questions, by the way, which bring you into touch with what real forces you are in contact with, are an important part of REAL mental MOTION, and if answered directly and honestly, will break the hold of ARTIFICIAL and STOPPED MOTION.

To use this triad requires first that you observe these states in yourself and others, then realize that ARTIFICIAL and STOPPED MOTION can take no constructive action. Direct, pertinent reasoning, question and answer, and use of basic triads will reconnect you to REAL MOTION and allow you to tackle the problems(s) directly or see that there is none, and release from it.

## ***RESISTANCE/ DENIAL/ NEUTRALIZATION***

These three stopping forces can be used intentionally when you want to stop someone or some force. However, they are often used unconsciously and as such frequently interfere in situations in which, if you asked yourself consciously, you would choose to assist.

RESISTANCE is an inner holding back, like digging in your heels against being pulled. You may outwardly appear to be listening or assisting, but inwardly you are arguing and not going along.

DENIAL is negating something which you know exists or you know has happened or you yourself have experienced, e.g. saying you can't do something that you've already succeeded at doing.

NEUTRALIZATION is not giving any response at all - it is as if the event or conversation did not occur.

The value of becoming aware of the unconscious ways in which we use these three forces is that once aware, we can often choose to overcome our unintentional RESISTANCE/ DENIAL/ or NEUTRALIZATION. The more we can assist that which we decide is HELPFUL\* to us, the further and faster we can move toward our goals and desires.

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\* See Triads of Assessment, page 48

### ***STATE/ ATTITUDE/ RESPONSE***

<u>INNER STATE</u>	<u>INNER ATTITUDE</u>	<u>OUTER RESPONSE</u>
ACTIVE	POSITIVE	ASSIST
EQUIPOISE	NEUTRAL	NEUTRAL
RESISTIVE	NEGATIVE	BLOCK

These triads for your INNER STATE and ATTITUDE, combined with the RESPONSE triad discussed with GIVE/TAKE/SHARE under Basic Triads, give a fuller picture of the shades possible behind the ASSIST/BLOCK/ or NEUTRAL. Any combination of these three triads is possible though some are certainly less common than others are.

ACTIVE/POSITIVE/ASSIST is all systems on go; you're involved, you feel good about it, you're going for it totally.

RESISTIVE /NEGATIVE / ASSIST is also possible. You are outwardly going along with the action, chore, etc. , but inwardly are in resistance and feel negatively about what's going on. Although you may actually be accomplishing the task at hand, your negative state is undoubtedly also having an effect, not only on those around you, but also on your own experience of what you are doing.

EQUIPOISE is that inner state in which you are neither ACTIVE nor RESISTIVE. EQUIPOISE is the basis of all meditative states and is a source of deep rest and relaxation.

As you observe your inner state and attitude, you will begin to see the many combinations you move through in various circumstances. This awareness, like that gained from all the triads of this section, increases your ability to choose the STATE/ ATTITUDE/and RESPONSE which will best serve your purpose in any given situation.



Teachers using the triad to gain further understanding of their students' inner STATES and ATTITUDES will be helped in interpreting their behavior, and often with this understanding can help the students increase their own self-awareness and change counterproductive behavior. When discussing these and other triads of self-awareness with students, always remember to relate their choices to their own goals, intentions, and desires. What will best serve their own interests?

## ***IMITATION/ OSMOSIS/ COMPETITION***

This triad is discussed in Chapter Five, page 17. It applies not only to learning to use triads, but to learning anything.

IMITATION is copying what others have done or are doing. Much, maybe most, school learning is IMITATION.

OSMOSIS is the process of being around something and gathering knowledge of it by absorption. It is not an analytical or physical process: knowledge or understanding "rubs off" on you because you are around those who know. You find yourself, out of nowhere, doing or understanding that which you have been hanging around.

COMPETITION is more than competing for the top spot or a prize. It is anything in which you are actively struggling to excel or to gain new territory, new understandings, new discoveries. See Chapter Five, page 18, for a discussion of COMPETITION.

As with many of the triads in this Chapter, each person tends to favor one of these over the others. However, to fully learn about something, you need to use all three of these, at different times, so that you experience it from different perspectives - not just being around-it, absorbing (OSMOSIS) ; but also, trying to copy how it is done, (IMITATION); and also, from your own point of view, tackling it, actively pursuing new insights, new ground neither absorbed or copied - this is learning through COMPETITION.

## **Chapter Ten**

### **Triads for Group Dynamics**

The triads of this group are particularly helpful in organizing groups, defining relationship within group projects or group structure and helping students understand their position in relationship to others and how it varies from group to group and from one situation to another.

All of the Basic Triads are also important to remember in connection with group interactions, particularly The Triad of Responses when Approaching a Dynamic; WORK/ PLAY/ PRACTICE; and CLOSER TO OUR GOAL/ FURTHER/ or the SAME.

***BOSS/ PARTNER/ SERVANT***  
***TEACHER/ STUDENT/ ASSOCIATE***

These two triads are based on the questions: Who knows MORE?/ Who knows LESS?/ Who knows the SAME? about a project or something you want to learn. A BOSS is chosen because s/he knows the most about the project to be attempted, and has the best chance of bringing it to successful completion. Those who know less agree to be SERVANTS for the project in order to arrive at the success point. If two or several people have about equal knowledge or understanding of the elements of the project, they agree to be PARTNERS.

One interesting thing about the use of this triad and forming agreements for specific projects is that BOSSES as well as SERVANTS are subject to being fired. The SERVANTS can fire the BOSS and choose a different one if they feel the BOSS is not doing a good job, is misusing the SERVANTS, or proves not to be as competent as believed initially. A good BOSS considers the SERVANTS' abilities and assigns accordingly. A good SERVANT does the best s/he can to carry out the BOSS' directives, since they are all in agreement, working toward a common goal, and the SERVANTS have chosen this BOSS because they believe him/her to be the best one to lead them.

Since these positions are by agreement and are based on who knows the most in any given project or situation, the relationships shift as the situation or involvements shift. You could be BOSS on one project, SERVANT in another, and PARTNERS with one or several people in still another area.

The same is true of the TEACHER/STUDENT/ASSOCIATE triad. The one who knows more is the one you will choose as TEACHER in order to learn something you want to know. If you are about equal in knowledge and are embarking on a project or interaction together, you would be ASSOCIATES. Again, you could be a TEACHER to someone in one

area and a STUDENT to the same person in another area.

It is important to remember that the STUDENTS cannot tell the TEACHER how to teach, just as the SERVANTS cannot tell the BOSS how to run the project. TEACHERS can be fired if they are not helping you learn. After several lessons, it is good to use one of the Triads of Assessment such as CLOSER TO MY GOAL/ FURTHER/ SAME to evaluate (see Page 42). However, if you have not wholeheartedly tried whatever the TEACHER recommends, you will not really know whether this TEACHER has done a good job or not. Similarly, in a BOSS/ SERVANT relationship, if the SERVANTS do not carry out their tasks to the best of their ability, and the project fails, they will not know if it was because of the BOSS' shortcomings or their own lacks.

Being a good PARTNER or ASSOCIATE is sometimes not as easy as it seems. The tendency for one person to dominate or take over is often present. PARTNERS never order, they suggest and discuss and come to consensus on things. They need to consider the others' point of view as deeply as their own. Knowing that you are PARTNERS, and reminding each other when necessary, should help to overcome these difficulties.

See page 21 for some suggestions on how to integrate this triad into the students' day.

## ***FEEDER/ FOLLOWER/ LEADER***

These are three positions within any organization. The LEADER is the one who sees the overall picture, knows the most about how to get to the goal, and takes responsibility for the success of the project. This last is a key point. The LEADER is taking responsibility for the success or failure of the venture. In order to have a fair chance at this, the LEADER needs those who have agreed to his/her leadership to carry out his/her directives to the best of their ability. They should have space to give feedback, suggestions, or questions, but the ultimate decisions about procedure are in the LEADER'S hands, and unless they fire the LEADER, they have agreed to give him/her the space to prove his/her ability by carrying out the directives issued. (See also BOSS/ PARTNER/ SERVANT, page 59. )

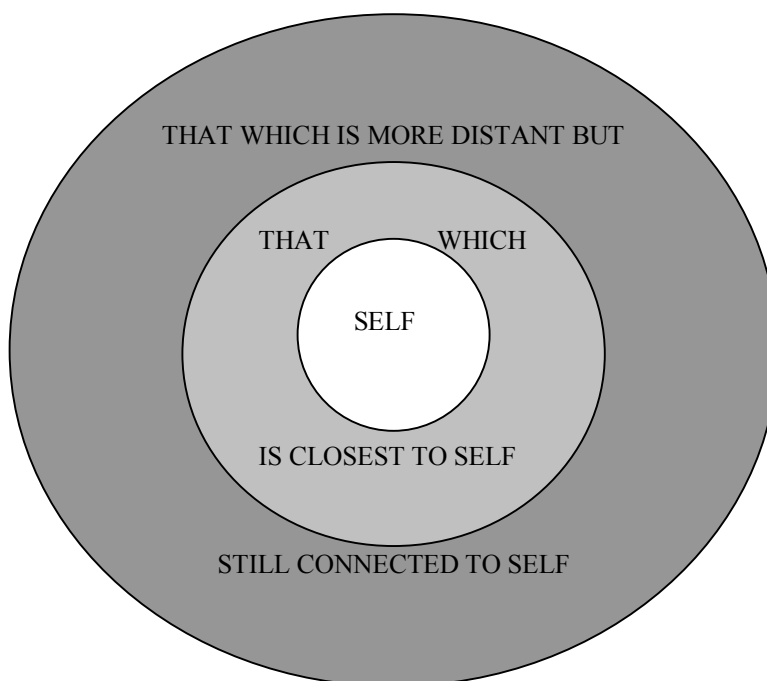
FOLLOWERS try to see as much of the overall plan as they can, and try to go beyond just following directives by taking the initiative to do things which they see need to be done toward the goal.

FEEDERS are those who simply carry out orders without worrying about or thinking about the overall plan or picture.

For example, one student may notice the plants need watering, get the watering can and do it. This is a FOLLOWER'S action. A student who waits to be told to do the watering or what have you is a FEEDER.

### *The Three Attentions*

A child begins life with only an awareness of "me." Later this begins to be differentiated into "me" and "not-me." At the age at which children can first begin to understand that another's view point is different from their own (see endnote, next page) it is possible to introduce the triads of the Three Attentions. These are sort of like concentric circles with yourself at the center.



Naturally the conception of what the circles consists of grows as the child's awareness grows.

Examples of how this concept expands:

myself	my mom	my family
myself	my family	my community
myself	my ethnic group	society as a whole
myself	my class	the whole school
myself	my country	the world
myself	the world	God (or some force greater than the world regardless of name)

The triad of HEAVEN/ EARTH/and MAN from Buddhist and Taoist tradition is an example of this triad, and it is applied in many ways, from flower arranging to understanding one's place in, and relationship to, the universe.

Many specific applications of this triad are possible; for example, in a musical band each member can listen to: MY OWN INSTRUMENT/ MY SECTION/ THE WHOLE BAND.

I got the name of the Three Attentions from my thirteen-year-old - that was how she described this triad. The three circles are the three levels of awareness to which you need to pay attention in order to perform well or understand your relationship to others in your world (however big you conceive of it.)

Note:

Recent research challenges the widely accepted Piagetian idea that children are totally egocentric up into the early primary grades and only gradually lose this quality. Recent studies have shown that children as young as three and four can literally see a scene from a perspective other than their own (which Piaget concluded they could not) , when the problem is presented in a way that makes sense to them, not merely as an abstract question. There is also new evidence that preschool children are able to empathize, understand, and act in order to compensate for another's point of view or level of ability which is different from their own.

(Margaret Donaldson, Children's Minds)



## **Chapter Eleven**

### **Triads for Mental Health**

All triads contribute to mental health, in that they increase awareness and enable you to make more conscious and better informed decisions. More conscious decision-making also means more information when reflecting back on a series of events, being able to remember what choices brought you to this point. Of the triads already covered I would like to mention here once again the triad of PARTICIPATE/ REDIRECT/ LEAVE. Keeping these three options always open and knowing how to use any of them at will is a basic tool for maintaining mental health - by avoiding becoming stuck, by knowing how to fully engage, and fully disengage, by knowing how to utilize the REDIRECT to reshape situations and interactions in directions more satisfying to you.

The triads covered in this group help maintain and increase mental health by helping you to define your needs and desires, so that you can plan better how to fulfill them. This also helps you see what aspects of your life plan or present situation are thwarting to your own inner needs, and will tend to lead to frustration, depression, rebellion, etc. There are also two triads included here which help you look at relationships and where you stand in those relationships. The more awareness you have about your relationships, where you stand, and where the relationship can go, the better are your chances for mutual fulfillment within that relationship.

We are all imperfect and incomplete human beings. As children we unavoidably missed out on certain things and as parents and teachers we inevitably make mistakes which will leave our children incomplete as well. I believe that through the active reasoning process using triads, you can recontact, create, or discover all the parts or experiences you feel you've missed or are lacking. By giving this process to our children, we give them the means to

create their own fulfillment in whatever ways they find satisfying to them, despite whatever they may have lacked growing up.

## *The Nine Points*

Acceptance

Security

Expression

Adventure

Power

Exchange

Communion

Expansion

Freedom

These Nine Points name things that all people are interested in and want to experience. However, out of the Nine, in any one individual, three are ACTIVE, three are PASSIVE and three are NEUTRAL. The ACTIVE points are those that you feel the most desire for and will actively pursue in order to have them in your life. These are the three you feel you cannot do without. If one or more of these is missing or thwarted you will feel dissatisfied, frustrated and unhappy - the more so the longer it goes unsatisfied. When all three are being fulfilled, you feel that life is full and satisfying.

The three PASSIVE points are ones that you like, will go along with them if someone else instigates the activity, but will not generally put ACTIVE effort into pursuing.

The three NEUTRAL points are those that you feel the least interest in; you can take or leave them, they aren't that important.

How does knowing your three ACTIVE points help you? By knowing consciously what three things you need in order to feel satisfied and fulfilled, you can arrange your life so that it allows those needs to find fruition. You can choose jobs or situations that will tend to assist you in fulfilling your three ACTIVE points. You can consciously plan to make space

for each of them so that you attain balance and a sense of satisfaction with life.

Knowing your three ACTIVE points enables you to locate the problem when you feel life is unsatisfactory or lacking. You can pinpoint what is missing and thus make the changes necessary to remove the blocks to the fulfillment of that point or points.

By knowing the ACTIVE points of yourself and others, such as friends, work partners, or even prospective mates, you can see how compatible (or incompatible) you are. If you have no points in common, the relationship will be virtually impossible. It would be hard even to communicate clearly - you would tend to constantly misunderstand each other. One or two points in common will show you the areas of common ground and the relationship will tend to revolve around activities which involve those points. If you get involved with someone with whom you have all three ACTIVE points in common, you will in all likelihood fall head over heels in love. You will probably be very compatible. A danger with this, however, is that you have so much in common that you may tend to forget the differences and individuality of your friend, and come to expect, him/her to be just like you.

#### *Some Common Questions About the Nine Points*

##### 1. What's the difference between Exchange and Communion?

Exchange is give and take - I'll give you this if you give me that; trading ideas, etc.

Communion is a sense of we're all in this together, we share everything. Communion always wants company rather than to be alone.

##### 2. What's Expansion?

Essentially, Expansion is empire building: always wanting to make it bigger and more "expansive" for example, in business (chain stores); groups (more members); or music (mass acceptance or mass production) etc.

##### 3. Does Acceptance mean acceptance of others or wanting to be accepted?

Both. A person with an ACTIVE Acceptance point wants very much to be accepted; this is

primary for them, and they will rarely do anything outside of the norm for that reason. This is a hard one, because our American society is very Acceptance oriented, and also, especially in adolescence, Acceptance is part of growing up and becoming part of society. Basically, I would say, if a person picks Acceptance as one of their three ACTIVE points right off, it probably is one of their ACTIVE points. But if they pick four and are having trouble choosing, keep looking at the others to see how strong the drive is toward these others in comparison to Acceptance.

#### 4. What's the difference between Adventure and Freedom?

People often pick Freedom as an ACTIVE point when what they really mean is Adventure. Adventure is doing new things, seeing new places, meeting new people, doing things which involve risk or a gamble. Freedom is a refusal to be hemmed in, committed, tied down in any way. A person with an ACTIVE Freedom point may choose a stable career or a marriage because of one of their other points, but the Freedom point will inevitably make them miserable and probably lead to self-sabotage or desertion.

Notes on how some points combinations influence each other: Adventure with an ACTIVE Security point is very different from Adventure without an ACTIVE Security point. Without a Security point, Adventure will often take outrageous risks, even life-threatening ones. With a Security point, it is more likely to plan its adventures so that there are some limits on the level of risk involved. Still, it likes to be surprised. Power and Security when combined add up to control. A person with these two points ACTIVE will be very controlling, and probably fear any situation in which control is lacking or threatened. For the first 27 years of my life my ACTIVE points were Power, Security, and Adventure. As you can imagine, all my adventures were very carefully surrounded by what I felt were safeguards, often the presence of people with whom I felt safe, or familiar structures or an organization in which I had faith. None of this was logical planning, however.

A point can shift from ACTIVE to PASSIVE or NEUTRAL and be replaced by a different ACTIVE point. This is not a frequent occurrence - it happens only when an ACTIVE point has been fully satisfied and fulfilled from that person's point of view, and the shift often brings about a major personality change. Family members and friends may feel that this person has taken leave of his/her senses, especially if the shift is to a very different point.

In presenting the Nine Points to a class or group, the best way is to start by listing them on the chalkboard and giving a very brief introduction. Explain that these are nine things all people are interested in, but for each of us there are three that are more important, that we will actively pursue in our lives and feel frustrated or thwarted if they are lacking. After this brief introduction, allow them time to choose their own three (ACTIVE) points. You might break up into small groups to discuss what they came up with. If people in the group know each other fairly well, it might be fun to guess each others' points and then see if the person's own choices agree with the perceptions of others who know them. However, only the individual can really say for sure what their three (ACTIVE) points are, and their life choices and level of satisfaction with their life will verify which -points are ACTIVE.

At another time a further discussion could be initiated around career, lifestyle and relationship choices and how well various choices fit an individual's three (ACTIVE) points. Again, it might be best to work in small groups so that there is more time to discuss each person's situation and possibilities in relation to their points, and so that the participants feel more comfortable with each other.

## *Three Types of Relationships*

### *NECESSITY/ TAGGED/ BUILT*

NECESSITY relationships are based on one person's need for something the other person can provide. The child has a NECESSITY relationship with the parent (but not vice-versa). The student has a NECESSITY relationship with the teacher. The side with the need is essentially powerless in the relationship. An equal give and take is impossible within the boundaries of the NECESSITY relationship. (This does not mean there is not a different type of give and take or sharing possible outside the area of need).

NECESSITY relationships are, by definition, limited in scope and time and should end and give way to BUILT relationships, and many would if not for TAGGED relationships.

TAGGED relationships are those in which the participants have placed invisible "tags" of ownership on each other and believe the tags to be statements of reality: "my" wife, husband, daughter, son, girlfriend, mother, etc. How can you own another person? Yet many people believe they can and do, and their mates, children, etc. , believe it too.

The placing of a tag puts limits on the possibilities of a relationship, on participants' possibilities outside the relationship, and blinds the participants from seeing the totality of the person they've tagged.

Whatever the sum of their past experience assigns to that particular tag is what they expect, and their expectations, projected onto the person they've tagged, limit that person's responses (if they are a willing player in the tagging) or eventually lead to rebellion (if they are unwilling). Biological relationships carry tags that are heavily charged, culturally, reinforced by years of dependence (NECESSITY) and permanentized through a projected sense of obligation.

I believe that children owe their parents honor and respect for the job they've done

raising them, but not a lifetime of continuing to wear a tag and behave under its edicts. To the extent that they learn to communicate with each other and let go of projection and old expectations, parents and children can BUILD a new relationship as adults who are mutually "pulling" for each other's fulfillment in life.

Children initially use tags mostly out of imitation, but partly also for the psychological security of feeling that if appropriately TAGGED, the adult will not prematurely abandon them in their dependency. They will thus tag anyone who functions as their provider, and the tag provides a psychological sense of safety.

Ideally, the adults refrain from tagging the children in return, and teach and pre-adapt the skills needed to later let go of tags and BUILD tag-free, open-ended relationships.

BUILT relationships are based on mutual respect and support and a process of building through an ever-changing cycle of giving, taking and sharing. Truth telling and exposure are indispensable to this process. Tags are destructive to the BUILDING of relationships. The tags put too many automatic limits on the possibilities for building. BUILT relationships are open and allow space for exploration by their participants, both within and outside the relationship. BUILT relationships need understanding and mutual agreements about how each will individually grow and find fulfillment, as well as how they will grow together.

It is possible for the giver in a NECESSITY relationship to leave space for a BUILT relationship to develop when the NECESSITY relationship ends, but only if the NECESSITY relationship is kept as free as possible from TAGS, and ends as soon as the need ends. The giver can even use his/ her position to pre-adapt and teach the receiver about the possibility of BUILT relationships and how to go about starting and enhancing them.

This triad should provide some particularly valuable discussions for teenagers. As they attempt to free themselves from their dependency on their parents, and begin to experiment



with more intimate friendships with their peers, many questions could be discussed based on this triad.

How do they view their relationship with their parents? What elements of NECESSITY remain? In what ways do TAGS affect their views of parents, teachers, peers ? How does our culture and society (including commercial advertising, pop music, movies, etc,) affect our expectations in relationships, creating the basis of the TAGS we place on others we relate to ? What elements are important to BUILDING relationships?

## ***OWE/ OWED/ EVEN***

This triad is used to assess from time to time where you stand in various relationships. As you look at what you've given, what you've received, what you've shared, you get an answer as to whether you OWE/ you are OWED/ or you are EVEN.

Sometimes your initial "gut" reaction to the question may turn out, when examined through thinking about actual events, to be incorrect.

This assessment is good because it keeps your feelings about the relationship in touch with the reality of the events and exchanges that have actually taken place.

Besides being used in personal relationships, this triad can also be used to think about your relationship with larger structures such as your family, church, community, and even the world in general. Do we, as a society, OWE the earth and its ecosystems/ are we OWED by them/ or are we EVEN?

Answering this question honestly automatically leads to a movement toward more correct behavior if there has been a discrepancy or lack of awareness within the interaction, as is often the case through unconsciousness.

Exercise:

In small groups, discuss the meaning of the triad. Have each person in turn answer the following questions:

1. Are there any people, groups, or systems you feel you OWE? How can you pay back this debt?
2. Does anyone OWE you? Do they agree with this assessment?
3. Name some people or groups you feel EVEN with. How do you or how can you keep it EVEN?

## ***EXPOSURE/ SECLUSION/ NUTRITION***

These are three basic needs, which, although common to everyone, exist in different proportions from one person to another.

EXPOSURE is the need for expression, exchange with others, to put yourself and your ideas out there and get a response. People in entertainment professions, politicians, etc. have a higher than average EXPOSURE need.

SECLUSION is the need to be alone, or at least with only those with whom you are extremely comfortable: to regroup, meditate, or just relax in whatever way is comfortable to you. Living life as a hermit is an extreme example of SECLUSION, although even a hermit must face EXPOSURE to the elements and to nature's forces.

NUTRITION refers not only to the food and water we take in and the air we breathe , but also to the impressions we receive in many forms from many sources. NUTRITION is whatever we receive or ingest psychologically or spiritually as well as physically, anything from outside which we take in.

The balance of these three needs is different for every person. However, all three are needed. One thing to look for is whether you are becoming unbalanced by neglecting or over extending in one of these areas. Much discussion can also be based around the many different ways of satisfying each of these needs.

Exercise:

1. Give a percentage for each of the three needs, indicating what amount of your total need is centered in each. E.g. 40% EXPOSURE/ 30% SECLUSION/ 30% NUTRITION.
2. Name at least three ways you find satisfying for fulfilling each of these needs.
3. In a small discussion group, share and compare your answers to 1 and 2. See how many other ideas you can come up with for meeting the three needs.

## *Your Own Triads*

Your own triads are triads you make about your goals and desires. It could be for the day, for a limited period of time in order to reach a goal or make a change, or for a much longer period, a "life triad" which is an overall picture of the balance you are seeking in your life.

Even small children can make a triad of three things they want to do today. As they get older, they can be asked to make a triad of three things they want to learn about, experience, or improve. Or they can make a triad about three things that make them feel good or happy in their lives - these are the things they would want to concentrate on protecting and enhancing. They may choose three things that they want in their life, and perhaps do not have all of them. This could lead to some very good discussion about how to go about getting those things, or what could substitute if something really is not feasible for them at this time, or how to make plans and preparations for having or experiencing a certain thing later, when they grow older and have more ability, more freedom, etc.

Adolescents and adults may find it helpful to take the Nine Points (page 66 ) as a starting point for making a life triad.. They may also make their own triads about what they want to accomplish or achieve at job, school, home, or in a relationship they are developing.

The point of making life triads and other personal triads is to help you define for yourself the picture of what you feel you need or want in your life or in a specific involvement. These triads shift and change as you fulfill certain desires or goals and move toward new ones. Having a threefold image of what you want or are trying to do helps keep you balanced and focused and gives you incentive to get past the rough spots and obstacles you'll inevitably encounter. It also helps you look more closely at and define just what it is that you want or hope to achieve or experience.

## **Chapter Twelve**

### **Triads for Specific Situations**

In this chapter I have put a sampling of triads we've used or still use for specific situations. Every project or plan can benefit from triads made specifically for that project. An example of how to approach making a triad and subtriads for a project is given in "Teaching triads to Different Age Levels," page 21.

There are also a number of examples given by those who answered the questionnaire on triad use, page 104.

## *Driving Triads*

These are several triads which help you become more conscious of the dangers involved in driving. More people are killed on the highways each year in this country than our total number of losses in the Vietnam War. This is a sobering thought, and young people, especially, do not usually think of this when they begin to drive. Anything that helps raise the awareness of drivers as to what the dangers are and how to be prepared for or avoid them is therefore of great value.

The primary triad is SPACE/ SPEED AND MOMENTUM/and MACHINERY. Each of these points has a subtriad, which will help make the major points clear.

1. SPACE This has to do with the space around the vehicle, how this space changes and what to do to keep a safe space. With sufficient space around you at all times, you will always be able to adjust to changes around you before you collide with something else.

### Subtriad

a. STAY IN THE FLOW OF THE TRAFFIC, - not a lot faster or slower than the other vehicles. This is especially important when entering or exiting a traffic flow - make your entry or exit quickly so as to be out of or into the flow as quickly as possible.

b. KEEP SPACE AROUND YOU AT ALL TIMES - Front, back, and sides. Don't tailgate, don't run neck and neck with another vehicle next to you, pull over and let others pass if they are tailgating you.

c. ALWAYS BE ON THE LOOKOUT FOR YOUR ESCAPE SPACE - If something goes wrong with your car or another near you, how can you get off the road or away from the trouble area? Keep aware of the shoulders, what's next to the road, other lanes available, etc. Where there is no escapes, such as a narrow bridge, try to time your passage to coincide with as few other vehicles as possible and stay within the flow of those that are there.

## 2. SPEED AND MOMENTUM

### Subtriad

a. NEVER EXCEED THE SPEED AT WHICH YOU CAN EASILY STOP IN HALF THE DISTANCE YOU CAN SEE (This distance, of course, decreases on hills, at curves, in fog, etc.)

b. BE IN A DESCENDING SPEED WHEN YOUR VIEW AHEAD IS BLOCKED OR DECREASING (as when approaching a hill, a blind intersection, curve. etc.)

c. USE A DESCENDING MOMENTUM WHENEVER THERE IS A POTENTIAL FOR COLLISION (when approaching an intersection; on two lane roads, whenever another vehicle is approaching from the opposite direction etc.)

3. MACHINERY: Most drivers take the correct functioning of all the mechanical parts of their car for granted. This is not a good idea, as mechanical problems can develop at any time, and any extra moments of warning give you time to look for the escape area, avoid other vehicles, etc.

### Subtriad

a. LISTEN - to the motor, transmission, wheels, etc. Become familiar with their normal sounds so that you will immediately notice any change in sounds, which could indicate trouble developing.

b. DO NOT DEPEND UPON YOUR BRAKES - Most drivers charge right up to the stop sign, traffic signal, or car in front, putting on the brakes at the last moment. Do they ever think about what would happen if the brakes failed? A more prudent course of action is to slow down well in advance of an anticipated stop, using the transmission to slow you down if it's a standard, giving yourself extra space. As any truck driver will tell you, this is especially vital when traveling in the mountains or on long steep hills.

c. PULL THE CAR RATHER THAN FREEWHEELING - This is rather difficult to

explain, but once you grasp this you will always know which you are doing. You are pulling the car whenever there is a load on the engine. Freewheeling occurs when the weight of the car pushes the motor. The reason to be pulling rather than freewheeling is that you have positive control when you are pulling, but when freewheeling you are in inertia.

Thinking about these triads when you're not driving, visualizing in your mind various possible scenarios that could take place on the road, will help prepare you for unexpected occurrences while driving.

Using these triads while driving will make you a more aware and therefore safer driver.



## *Chess*

We came up with these triads for chess playing one winter while doing an intensive chess learning tournament with our three teenagers, who are home-schooled. Their playing definitely improved from using these triads.

1. Before each move, ask yourself - Am I AHEAD/ BEHIND/or EVEN? You make this assessment by examining three things - Your POINTS, compared to your opponent (points are based on how many pieces you have; different pieces are worth different numbers of points)/ Your POSITION (good position gives advantage for attack and defense, poor position has you spread out, without a united and bolstered attack force and with limited ability to defend)/ and how many WASTED MOVES you have made or will have to make because of mistakes, over-extension etc.

After assessing your standing by answering this first question, you next decide -

2. Will you now ATTACK/ DEFEND/ or REPOSITION for advantage? If you have assessed that you are BEHIND, as a rule you should not ATTACK. You should be DEFENDING (if necessary) or REPOSITIONING to gain advantage. Only if you can maneuver so as to have a clear advantage in a certain area of the board would you have a chance of a successful ATTACK even though BEHIND overall. However, even if it seems you are in an advantage position in one part of the board, you should never ATTACK at the expense of losing advantage in another section or overall.

The keynote to these triads is to use them before every move.

1. Make your assessment of where you stand - AHEAD/ BEHIND/or EVEN (based on POINTS/ POSITION/and WASTED MOVES).

2. Then decide: ATTACK/ DEFEND/ or REPOSITION.

## *Music*

We have had a family band for eight years and have used many different triads at different times in practice and performance. A version of the Three Attentions (page 62 ) which applies to music playing in a band is to listen to YOUR OWN INSTRUMENT/ listen to YOUR SECTION (brass, rhythm, etc.)/ and listen to THE WHOLE BAND. This three-way listening gives you a broader perspective on the sound of the music you are making individually and collectively, and brings you into attunement with the parts and the whole. This triad is one of the practical examples covered in Chapter Fourteen; it was used by a junior high school band and the students filled out questionnaires before and after using the triad. (see page 92.)

We often make individual triads for how we want to approach a particular performance. One I use a lot when working with my husband as a duet is RELAX/ PAY ATTENTION TO MY BREATHING/ and PROJECT THE EMOTIONAL CONTENT of the songs.

A triad we've used in connection with improvisational jazz dance is FORM/ MOTION/and ENERGY. FORM refers to the beat and rhythm of the song and the actual physical postures of the dance. MOTION is the movement of the body within space. ENERGY is the feeling and expression which you are projecting through the dance.

There are many other triads we've used - some for just one occasion, others over and over, but these examples should serve to give you an idea of what's possible.

*A Triad for Interpreting the Use of Language:*

***DEFINITIVE/ ALLEGORICAL/ SYMBOLIC***

This triad is extremely useful in evaluating what you are reading but also many times in listening to speakers and verbal presentations as well.

DEFINITIVE language is exact and means just what it says. It is literal and precise.

ALLEGORICAL language is the use of proverbs, myths, and parables. It is not literal and the meaning must be interpreted from the picture the words present.

SYMBOLIC language occurs when words are used to represent something other than their literal definition; for example, in the Christian church the bread of the Eucharist is called the body of Christ. This is not literal - it is SYMBOLIC.

Thinking of these three categories enables you to define for yourself which type of language is being used in material you are reading or hearing. If you think DEFINITELY about something that was meant ALLEGORICALLY, you are likely to be confused. On the other hand, when DEFINITIVE statements are made, if you do not take them DEFINITELY you could also run into difficulties.

Children at first take everything as DEFINITIVE and need to be helped through many explanations and examples to eventually understand these three types of language and be able to tell the differences between them. Even if they cannot interpret all the ALLEGORY and SYMBOLISM, it is enough at first to at least recognize it as such. Interpretation will come later after much exposure and pondering.

### *Three Aspects of Health:*

#### ***PHYSICAL/ PSYCHOLOGICAL/ SPIRITUAL***

One of the shortcomings of modern medicine (being remedied today by the growth of the holistic health movement) is its focus on the PHYSICAL, as though the body were all there is to the human being. After Freud, some attention began to be paid to the PSYCHOLOGICAL aspects of health and how PSYCHOLOGICAL factors can affect PHYSICAL well being. But still this is considered a relatively minor point in comparison to the focus on the body itself.

I believe that the three factors - PHYSICAL/ PSYCHOLOGICAL/and SPIRITUAL - are fully intertwined and that each has an effect on the others. Health comes about only when all three are functioning in a healthy and balanced way.

It is only in recent history that the SPIRITUAL aspects of people have been so neglected. In reading the history of education, it became apparent to me that the SPIRITUAL side was always an important part of education. The same is true of health and healing. All ancient systems of healing dealt with the SPIRITUAL aspects of the sick person as well as the body.

SPIRITUAL does not mean religious. Religions are various interpretations of the SPIRITUAL nature of people and the universe. But each person can form his/her own SPIRITUAL viewpoint , which fits his/ her own belief system and world view.

In looking at health, whether from the point of view of healing someone sick, or in maintaining good health and preventing illness, I believe it is vital to consider all three of these aspects and take steps to restore or maintain the person's health in all three.

## *A Triad for Research and Discovery*

### ***INVESTIGATE/ ASSESS/ EXPRESS***

This is a cycle triad I have used with students to help them follow through in research and discovery projects. They may be entering this cycle from any of the three points - EXPRESSING what they already know or have observed about something; INVESTIGATING by asking a question, probing or trying something new; ASSESSING by making some evaluation of what they know about a topic, which in turn can lead into either EXPRESSING what they've learned or INVESTIGATING further.

The point of this cycle triad is that no matter where students enter it, if they move through all three points at least once on a given topic of research, discovery, or learning, they will have a rounded perspective on the subject. They may go through various points of the triad several times as they ASSESS what they've found out, leading to new questions, which in turn leads them back to more INVESTIGATION; or in EXPRESSING something they've found, the questions of others may lead to a different ASSESSMENT or more INVESTIGATION.

This triad can be used to help introduce students to the many forms of INVESTIGATION, from reading and library research, to interviewing, to the scientific method of experimentation with controls. ASSESSMENT includes self-evaluation as well as appropriate evaluation by both teachers and peers or fellow INVESTIGATORS. EXPRESSION, too, can take many forms - oral and written reports, dramatic performance of skits or role plays, presentation of collections or experimental results; there are all sorts of imaginative possibilities.

This triad promotes follow-through and helps overcome the tendency to jump from one focus to another without developing depth on any of them.

## **Chapter Thirteen**

### **World View Triads**

These are some deeper triads which can lead to much discussion and individual pondering. I am including them here for just that purpose - as fuel for thought and topics for group discussions. The pictures these triads present urge you to ponder deeper and look at life with a bigger or different perspective.

## *The "God" Triad*

I use "God" in quotation marks because in this triad I am referring to the idea or concept of some force more powerful and all-encompassing than we humans can see or verify with our ordinary senses. This force has been given many different names in different times and cultures, but for the purpose of conceptualizing this triad, I will simply use the word "God." This triad represents three possible positions or belief systems relative to such a force.

1. There is no God. This world is a jungle, and the fittest survive. Look out for yourself (and your own family) and let others look out for themselves.

2. There is a God, who is creator of us all, but some of us are special or chosen, and therefore deserve more than others do.

3. There is a God, we are all children of God, and are all equal and deserve equally; therefore, we should all share and help one another.

When you begin to think about this triad, you may realize that many people, if questioned, think or project that they are in agreement with a different point than their life actions show them to actually believe. One of the benefits of pondering this triad is in seeing those discrepancies, not just in others, but in ourselves as well. The important thing with this triad is to decide which point you believe is correct, and then watch your own behavior to see if it correlates with what you've decided to be right. Any one of these points will lead to new levels of understanding, if consciously chosen and pursued with purity.

## ***FAIRNESS/ WAR/ MACHINE***

Knowing which point on this triad a person (force, nation) is coming from can help you choose how you will respond.

FAIRNESS - the person is trying to treat others with FAIRNESS, does not want to violate or short-change others in any way; wants their action toward others to be appropriate to how others treat them. FAIRNESS requires at least a conscious intention to be fair, even if you are not conscious of all your actions and their effects.

WAR is the attack force, whether conscious or unconscious. FAIRNESS is not considered under WAR. A conscious attack always has the advantage over an unconscious attack. Bitching, griping, arguing, are all WAR tactics, usually expressing unconscious motivations.

MACHINE - is action purely from mechanical patterns of behavior that have been programmed into a person by family and society. These actions and responses are all unconscious and often have effects the person would not choose, had s/he acted from conscious intentions.

The idea of MACHINE is from Gurdjieff, who said that people live in a sort of waking sleep, reacting to life based on conditioned patterns of behavior rather than responding appropriately to the realities of the moment. The key to knowing that a person is acting from the MACHINE point is in whether s/he is actually evaluating the situation or interaction and choosing his/her response.

Parents, for example, frequently discipline their children in ways that are either very much the same as their own parents' patterns or close to the opposite. As Dreikurs (Maintaining Sanity in the Classroom) -pointed out, this discipline is often arbitrary, rather than being based on the natural or logical consequences of the child's actions. Natural or



logical consequences require rational process on the part of the adult, which is beyond MACHINE and into FAIRNESS.

Another example of MACHINE action is the way most people drive - they are really "on automatic" - operating off habits and conditioned responses, not consciously calculating the dangers of hurtling down the road at high speed encased in several tons of steel. (See Driving triads, page 77 ).

Using this triad to ponder your own behavior will begin to give you insight into these three points. When are you "on automatic"? Was the response you just made one you chose to make, or did it just come out of you, maybe producing an effect you didn't really want? When are you making WAR unconsciously by giving someone else a hard time (perhaps someone you care about, but you are just in a bad mood)? Who in your life are you trying to be FAIR with, and how well are you succeeding? (WAR and MACHINE actions are what get in the way of FAIRNESS.)

Through self-observation and pondering, you will come to an understanding of these three points, and begin to understand the actions of others better as well.

## ***PATTERN/ LOGIC/ PERCEPTION***

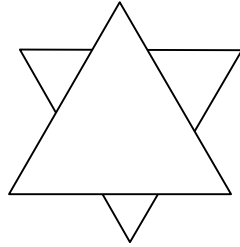
These are three ways of tackling a problem or approaching life in general.

PATTERN is routine, imitation, doing what you've done before or what you've seen others do.

LOGIC is using rational thought and a reasoning process to figure out what obstacles must be overcome, what solutions could work, what the steps to success might be. This may include what others have done as a part of the solution process, but is not limited to following past pattern.

PERCEPTION is the creative or intuitive process by which a new solution, insight, or direction is discovered. PERCEPTION is blocked by following PATTERN, or being stuck in routine. PERCEPTION goes beyond LOGIC, and sometimes seems to defy logical process, but "the proof is in the pudding." Test PERCEPTION by checking it out in action and assessing the results.

## *Solomon's Seal*



This symbol can be interpreted as representing an inner triangle and an outer triangle, one pointing inward toward your being or inner self, and the other outward toward the world.

The points of the inner triangle are FREEDOM/ CREATIVITY and WILL

The points of the outer triangle are STRUCTURE/ POWER/ and PRODUCTIVITY.

There is a correlation between the points of the two triangles, i.e.

WILL relates to POWER

CREATIVITY to PRODUCTIVITY

FREEDOM to STRUCTURE

FREEDOM and STRUCTURE may seem to be opposites. This is a paradox which takes much pondering. Certain structures allow more freedom than would exist without them. For example, the structure of our democratic society, with division of labor and voluntary participation in various parts of the structure, allows the individual far more freedom than s/he would have in a simple, agricultural society with less structure but more necessity for adherence to the laws of nature, less free time, etc.

## **Chapter Fourteen**

### **Triads in Action**

These are some accounts of specific triads used in various situations by others. I've included interviews from a number of individuals who have used triads for various lengths of time, giving examples from their own lives.

There is also an original fable that illustrates the use of the triad of BOSS/  
PARTNER/ SERVANT.

## *A Junior High Band Listens on Three Levels*

A junior high school band was given the triad of listening to: YOUR OWN INSTRUMENT/ YOUR SECTION/ and the WHOLE BAND. The students filled out a questionnaire before they were given the triad, rating their own playing and stating what they listen to while playing. After the triad was explained, they had about two weeks of rehearsal, during which they were reminded of the triad before each rehearsal, and then gave a concert. After the concert, they filled out a second questionnaire. Copies of both questionnaires follow.

In answering whether they felt the exercise of using the triad for listening had helped them, 18 students out of 27 responded yes (as individual players) and 17 responded yes (as members of the band). 18 out of 27 stated they would continue to use the technique of listening on three levels. (0 answered no; 9 answered sometimes, maybe, probably, or I guess.)

The students' comments were most interesting. One student wrote: "It helped me hear the band as a whole and understand that every instrument has its own part of the music and they are all equally important in each song or overture. I like this idea and wish someone would have come up with a plan like this before. This particularly helped me with listening to myself. I now hear myself out of the band and try to get as even with them as possible."

Eleven students wrote positive comments, such as, "It helped me play better and the band sound better."

Thirteen made no comments. One student simply said it wasn't difficult. One said, "It hardly changed the way I play and the way the band plays."

One wrote, "I don't know! What exercise?"

The teacher's comments were as follows:

"I did see some improvement with the students when they concentrated on the triad

thinking. I mainly could hear the difference with the band playing as a whole. It did seem useful to introduce this method but it was so difficult only having them two times a week to keep the idea going... I'm lucky the students remember their instruments every day let alone another idea. It is a good idea, and I would use the idea again with that group or another group."

Questionnaire #1.

1. What do you listen to while you are playing? Please be as specific as possible.
2. On a scale of 1 - 10, 10 being the best you think you can do, 1 being the worst, how would you rate your playing now?

Individually \_\_\_\_\_

Yourself in the band \_\_\_\_\_

The whole band's playing \_\_\_\_\_

## Questionnaire #2

1. Use a scale of 10 to answer the following question, with 10 being extremely successful, 1 being not at all successful. At the beginning of this exercise, how successful do you feel you were at being able to listen to

Yourself \_\_\_\_\_

your section \_\_\_\_\_

the whole band. \_\_\_\_\_

2. Give a percentage of time you feel you now listen to

yourself \_\_\_\_\_

your section \_\_\_\_\_

the whole band \_\_\_\_\_

3. On a scale of 1 - 10, 10 being the best you think you can do, 1 being the worst, how would you now rate your playing?

individually \_\_\_\_\_

yourself in the band \_\_\_\_\_

the whole band's playing \_\_\_\_\_

4. Do you feel this exercise has helped you as a musician?

As a member of the band?

5. How difficult was this exercise for you at the beginning?

6. Did it become easier after a period of time?

7. Will you continue to use this technique of listening on three levels?

8. Please make any comments you would like to about how the exercise went for you. If you have a specific example of something that happened or changed as a result of this exercise, that would be particularly helpful. Thank you.



## *An Adult Education Teacher Introduces Triads to Her Classes*

This teacher was really enthusiastic about triads and dove right in. There were several problems, however, which I think stemmed from not being able to give her specific enough instructions from the beginning and the infrequency of contact (about once a month). I would want to have more specific activities arranged ahead of time and more frequent dialogue about how it was going. However, her enthusiasm did not wane and even at the end of the semester she says, "I wish I had more time to experiment but the semester is over so soon." I will definitely continue to work with her during the coming school year, if possible.

I am going to use a lot of quotes from her letters to give the sequence of her experiments with introducing triads.

"All of my students are adults. They range in age from 17 to over 40. Most are white, poor, parents. Many are single. Many work at least part time while attending school. I teach four classes every week. One is a math class, two high school chemistry classes, and a class called Career Decisions. The chemistry classes are for students who are entering a health profession field who did not have chemistry while they were in high school. I have a lot of fun with this class. Once the basic theory part is over we work on applications of chemistry in the 'real world' as much as possible. Some of the topics we will be involved with this semester are nuclear medicine, sexuality, food additives, and medications. I try to use some situational ethics in the class as well as 'straight' facts as modern nursing students and nurses on the floor are constantly trying to make decisions quickly - many of which have more to do with good interpersonal relations and common sense than medical knowledge (e.g. when we talk about sexuality we get into what would you say to a patient who tells you she is considering having an abortion. Some of my students just say they'd avoid the issue. I tell them sometimes it will be unavoidable and that they'll have to figure out some way to deal with it with the patient. ) I think the triad idea would be useful with this kind of problem solving."

She already had two pages of basic triads (see p.102-3) and I replied about her chemistry classes by giving her the triads of assessment as being good basic triads for situational ethics: HELPFUL/ HARMFUL/ INDIFFERENT; BETTER/ WORSE/ SAME; CLOSER TO MY GOAL/ FURTHER/ SAME; INCREASE/ DECREASE/ STABILIZE; and also PARTICIPATE/ REDIRECT/ LEAVE. I also gave her some specific triads relating to unplanned pregnancy, since this was one issue she mentioned.

## Choices in unplanned pregnancy:

### 1. Raise Baby Myself:

- alone
- with father
- with some other person(s)

### 2. Have Someone Else Raise Baby

- Someone I know
- Someone I don't know and will have no contact with
- Someone I don't know but will develop some contact with

### 3. Abort Baby

Subtriad: ? I don't know enough about abortion, but it would have something to do with choices involved either in methods, timing, environments (including support offered) possibly decisions about to whom to reveal or not reveal this action. There may be several subtriads here.

The teacher at presented the first two pages of triads verbatim and out of these, the students seemed to pick up mainly on BLOCK/ ASSIST/ NEUTRAL as it related to what action to take toward the patients. For example, one situation given was that during a prenatal tour of the hospital , a mother begins to quarrel with her daughter. What do you do? The choices they made seemed to fall into confront (BLOCK); get them help (counseling, etc. ) (ASSIST) ; or ignore the issue (NEUTRAL). The teacher tried to point out that some of their ASSIST ideas were a bit unrealistic (counseling was not available or possible in this setting) and that confrontation (BLOCK) had to be handled carefully in order not to become an ENEMY to the patient.

"Many of the students said they weren't certain they wanted to become a nurse if they would have to deal with these issues, but I tried to encourage them to see

themselves as educating their patients to make their own decisions rather than taking on the burden of making decisions for the patients. I tried to steer them away from becoming the patient's ENEMY as much as possible, although some of the students seemed to think that confrontation at the risk of becoming an enemy was okay.

Most of my students like the NEUTRAL/ STRANGER stance in triadic thinking. Occasionally (I'd say, one student in 10) wanted to confront patients. Others agreed that confrontation was necessary, but thought doctors should confront patients rather than nurses (these chemistry students are all studying to be nurses). Another group of students (say, two in 10) said that they could make decisions regarding patient ethics but didn't really see what triads had to do with these decisions. Usually these were people who could see all sides of an issue and were making what I considered to be well-thought out decisions anyway, so I assured them that triads are certainly not the only way to think, just a tool for more critical thinking."

Apparently the triads of assessment and the triads relating to unplanned pregnancy were not used.

With another group, a lengthy discussion was generated off the Relationships Triad.

"The other class in which I used the triads was my "career decisions" class at the jail. I never know who will show up for a class at the jail - who will be locked up for the day due to behavior or who will be out on Huber Law, who will be sick, who will have a guard on their wing that won't let them come, etc. This particular time I had a group of eight men (men and women are kept separate), ranging from barely English speaking Hispanics to high school dropouts to near college graduates. This group really came alive when I discussed the triads with them, particularly the deeper triads section on relationships. There is a lot of pent-up hostility and frustration among these men. They believe that no one on the jail staff treats them as if they are human beings - more like dogs or slaves. They saw their relationships at the jail as TAGGED (inmate, lowlife, dog, etc.) or NECESSITY (after all, they do get food and shelter while they are in jail, for what it's worth). They do not feel they can BUILD much of a relationship with even the other inmates because they do not trust the advice of someone who is in jail just like they are. However, they would like to have more of a sense of BUILDING a relationship with staff - isn't that what rehabilitation is all about if they are to return to society having 'learned a lesson'? This was quite a lively discussion. I don't know that we accomplished great things, but it was good for them to let off some steam, to feel that at least I was willing to see them as human beings rather than dogs or infants - to be kicked or kept in a childlike dependency. Another interesting thing about working with this group was that they thought the women in the world needed to know more about relationships - generally I see women in my work who think they have been dumped on (and have, indeed, often been dumped on) by men - this time I was seeing men who felt that they'd been mistreated by women in their relationships. I don't know that this latter attitude was terribly healthy - in jail populations often repeat inmates are the ones who don't take responsibility for their own actions. In seeing themselves as victims of women, of jail staff, etc., in their relationships, they were sometimes abusing the triad idea to their own advantage, to justify themselves as less guilty or less responsible for their actions. One more interesting thing about the jail population. I brought in a former inmate to speak to the

group one week - a guy who had been in and out of jail for years but who now has his act together, is going to graduate and look for a job, etc. I would have thought that the group in jail would have tried to develop a FRIEND or BUILDING relationship with the former inmate as he spoke. They chose, however, to see him as more of a STRANGER, someone above them. However, when I brought a female former inmate, they seemed to see her as more equal - maybe because they are a very traditional group as far as women's roles - she may have been out of jail, but she was still a lowly woman so she was more on the same level as they were. I don't know how much of this I am imagining, but it's fairly valid."

When I questioned her as to whether she had been able to lead this discussion into *how* to BUILD a relationship, she replied that this had not been possible, as the participants seemed very ready to see their problems in relating as always being the other person's fault. She felt they had some valid feelings about the attitude of staff toward them, but in general could not apply these ideas to *themselves* because they always had someone else to blame.

She introduced the Nine Points (page 66) to a very small group right at the end of the semester and this too led to some very good discussion.

"I tried out the Nine Points ideas on some of my students last Friday. I did as you suggested on the phone - I simply wrote down the Nine Points and briefly explained what each of them meant with a word or a phrase. We were sitting around a table as I only had three students in the group, so I did the writing on a piece of paper. Then I went away for a few minutes and left them alone to decide which of the three points they believed were most like them. I think you should know a little about the three students who joined me. One was an eighteen-year-old who is attending my class and others in the GED program under a special arrangement with her high school. She is so far behind in credits that she has no hope of completing high school with a traditional diploma. This student's name is Joy. She usually says little or nothing in class discussions and participates about 50% of the time in class assignments, regardless of the class. The second student is a grandmother at age 40. She is also working on her GED. She is learning disabled so that reading is a problem, but she is very capable in the world - she has successfully raised three children and completed a nursing assistant course. She works part-time as a department store clerk and part-time as a nursing assistant. Her name is Mary. The third student is named Kathy. Kathy is a single parent. She has a high school diploma, but is attending school under the AFDC sponsored JOBS program. Kathy's math and reading skills are so low that she is not yet ready for any of our technical school programs. She is a former factory worker. She worked for thirteen years at Frito-Lay. Kathy's biggest problem is self-confidence. She has almost none. Mary, Kathy, and Joy all chose Acceptance and Security as two of their important points. Joy also chose Exchange. Mary chose Adventure. Kathy chose Freedom. I tried to get them to talk a little bit about why they thought these points fit them. All said that they valued both accepting self and accepting others. Mary, who has been married for 22 years, values security in relationships. Kathy

values monetary security more than relationship security, although she is very close to her son (her only child). Joy is quite interested in analyzing the way she forms relationships. She has had friendships with a man who is now in prison and with an alcoholic - both teenagers. She sees herself as falling into traps of protecting and covering for her male friends. She didn't mention any female friends. She believes in give and take in relationships, but has noticed that she does a lot of giving - perhaps too much in trying to save a friend. She still visits her friend in jail. A week or so ago she was so concerned about the alcoholic friend's drinking that she tried to get a school authority to intervene. Her alcoholic friend was furious. In both of these relationships she found that the troubled friend rejected her (so that she felt that the giving on her part should stop as she was getting nothing in return), only to come back for her support and friendship after a few weeks or months. The Nine Points discussion gave her an opportunity to share some of what was obviously bothering her and to focus on herself and her own goals rather than on the needs and goals of her friends. The Nine Points discussion was the first one in which Joy really took part during the semester. I think the fact that the group was all women helped. Mary's comments about Adventure were interesting. She likes the idea of trying new things. She gets bored with doing the same tasks at a job every day. She likes her work in nursing and in retail because it is so varied. Yet she is also very tied to her husband. She says that wherever he goes she will follow. Kathy doesn't want any ties. She would like a nice monotonous job (she would like to be a dental hygienist, clean the same types of teeth everyday, I guess) that she wouldn't have to think about, wouldn't have to get too connected to. Again, her big problem is accepting herself. She simply doesn't think she will ever be smart enough to do anything. The students spent about an hour on this assignment. If I were to try it again I would be sure to use nice small groups like this one. Also, I should tell you, I suppose, that I chose three points (Security, Exchange and Adventure) which I thought represented me so that I could be a part of the group, too. It was interesting to have the students guess a bit before I chose my points - to try to figure out what I would pick. That might be a good exercise some time for groups that know each other fairly well - try to predict (silently at first) what someone else will pick. I would like to try this with individual students as well as with groups, I don't think it would be appropriate for a whole class as we wouldn't have enough time to share everyone's ideas."

In retrospect, it seems to me that in each of these examples, the use of triads could have been taken further or made more specific through follow up in later class sessions or pursuing the ideas a little further. For example, in the chemistry class situational ethics exercise, she "asked them to break up into small groups and decide what they would do as a nurse in the situation described, and how it related to triadic thinking."

Each situation presented could have been viewed under several triads but the use of triads apparently stopped at the point of deciding whether to confront, be neutral, or try to help. (BLOCK/ ASSIST/ NEUTRAL). For example, if they decide to confront or to try to help, what three choices do they have for what help they will offer or for what they will say in the confrontation?

The group at the jail is admittedly a very difficult group. However, the question of how to BUILD a relationship could be approached without directing it at the clients themselves, by having them project how the staff could work to BUILD with them, then possibly showing how the reverse could be helpful as well, or applying their statements about staff to other interpersonal relationships.

The Nine Points discussion could be extended by asking how their chosen three points related (or didn't relate) to their present job or life style, how their goals or plans for the future fit (or didn't fit) their three points, etc.

I am hopeful that this teacher will continue to work with me and that new and better activities and discussions will develop out of her involvement.

## Examples of Some Basic Triads

GIVE/ TAKE/ SHARE

BLOCK/ ASSIST/ NEUTRAL

- Is this person (force) moving toward me to GIVE/ TAKE or SHARE?
- Do I want to BLOCK/ ASSIST/or remain NEUTRAL to this force?

BOSS/ PARTNER/ SERVANT

The possible positions when people are involved in a project, job, etc

TEACHER/ STUDENT/ ASSOCIATE

The TEACHER is the TEACHER because he or she knows more; the STUDENT wants to learn what the TEACHER knows; people become ASSOCIATES when they know the same amount about something

BETTER/ WORSE/ SAME

Relates to progress in learning a skill, condition of health, etc.

HELPFUL/ HARMFUL / INDIFFERENT

In terms of my goals - how will this action or activity effect my progress toward my goals?

FRIEND/ STRANGER/ ENEMY

PARTICIPATE/ REDIRECT/ LEAVE

Do I want to PARTICIPATE with this as it is, try to change it (REDIRECT) or LEAVE it?

## Examples of Some Deeper Triads

REAL MOTION - thought and action that are direct and make sense, relate to the events taking place.

ARTIFICIAL MOTION - mind is disconnected from what is going on; pretended or excess motion, unnecessary talk or movement which hinders real examination or action.

STOPPED MOTION - Refusal or unwillingness to look; blocking, shutting down, inability to move

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BUILT RELATIONSHIPS - are based on mutual respect and support and a process of building through an ever-changing cycle of giving, taking and sharing. Truth telling and exposure are indispensable to this process.

NECESSITY RELATIONSHIPS - are based on one person's need and the other's supplying that need. Examples are parent/child, teacher/student, etc. Relationship should end, or grow toward a built relationship, when the need has been fulfilled or outgrown.

TAGGED RELATIONSHIPS - take place between those who tag each other with titles such as girlfriend, mother, husband, and expect the other to relate based on the conditioned patterns that the title has come to represent in their unconscious thought process, rather than looking at the other to see who they really are at that moment and relating to them accordingly.

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Three ways to use language

DEFINITIVE - the words mean just what they say

SYMBOLIC - the words represent something else

ALLEGORICAL - metaphor; parable

\*\*\*\*\*

Ways of approaching problem solving

PATTERN - routine, habit, mechanical approach

LOGIC - using rational thought process

PERCEPTION - intuitive, creative approach that can come only after PATTERN has been dropped



## *Interviews*

The first five interviews are with the children who are growing up with/have grown up with the triads. They have had very little formal teaching of the triads - they've learned mainly through being around us, and through their own struggles to achieve what they want, aided by triads - learning by doing.

Donna and Leslie are of the original group that began working with the triads fifteen years ago.

Rodger, although he has known about triads for four years, has really only been actively working with them for about eight months, since he started working with us as crew on our boat.

Linda and Marti are two students who took a six week introductory course on triads, meeting once a week.

Harrison Terrell is my brother, and has been exposed to triads through me for a long time, though he has spent little time formally studying with us.

I have made some comments - these are in parentheses. Everything else is quoted directly from the interviews.

Interview/Questionnaire

Jessica Terrell      Age 7

1. How long have you known about triads?

About two years, I think

2. How often would you say you use triads?

I'd say twice every other day. Back at the boat we take walks a lot and each time we take a walk I make a triad. For example,

Watch out for cars/ Don't go into stranger's houses/ Scream if anyone tries to get you

Another example: Triad for boarding the boat:

Grasp wrist/ if plank falls, jump to side/ Hold on tight to the ladder

3. Do you feel triads are helpful to you?

Yes. They help me look out for things that are going to hurt me, and decide to: Block/ Assist/ or be Neutral.

4. Do you use basic triads in your everyday life?

Sometimes, not a lot

5. Do you use triads in planning projects or how to reach a goal?

No. I used a triad in my diary:

What I felt bad about/ what I felt good about/ What I felt normal about, and why!

6. Do you use triads to assess your position or progress?

Yes. Like when I'm sick, I use Better/ Worse/ Same

7. Do you use triads when confronted by difficult life problems, crisis, or confusion.?

No, but I should.

8. Does using a triad ever help you to change your way of responding?

No.

9. Do you have a life triad?

Yes. Running/ Acting/ and Singing, - for work

Writing/ Stretching / Reading - for play

10. Other triads?

No.

Interview/Questionnaire

Esther Jo Armstrong

Age 8

1. How long have you known about triads?

Three years (Esther has been with us three years)

2. How often would you say you use triads?

All the time

3. Could you give me one you used today?

Loading the car: Have a good attitude/ Be careful with the instruments/ Don't bother Marisa (who is packing the things in the car)

4. Do you feel triads are helpful to you? How?

Yes. they help me think more about what I'm doing. They help me not get in trouble.

5. Do you use triads in planning projects or how to reach a goal?

Yes. Example: Cleaning my room: Put things away neatly/ Have a good attitude/ Check when I'm done to be sure it is done

(A better triad she once gave me when she actually was cleaning her room: Pick up the floor/ Put things away in their proper places/ Hang up all the clothes)

6. Do you use triads to evaluate or assess your position or progress?

No.

7. Do you use triads when confronted by difficult life problems, crisis or confusion?

No.

8. Does using a triad ever help you to change your way of responding, doing something different than your first impulse would lead you to do?

Yes (couldn't give example)

9. Do you have a life triad?

Yes: Dance/ Read/ Write

10. Any other triads?

No.

Interview/Questionnaire

Marisa C. Terrell

Age 13

1. How long have you known about triads?

Eleven years

2. How often would you say you use triads?

Daily. Depending on situation.

3. Do you feel triads are helpful to you? How?

Yes. They help me with projects in figuring out what I need to do, how close I'm getting, etc.

4. Do you use basic triads in your everyday life?

Yes I do. I use Work/ Play/ Practice and Active/ Passive/ Neutral a lot.

5. Do you use triads in planning projects or how to reach a goal?

Yes I do. When planning for a goal I always make a triad or several.  
Example: (For spending the summer living with friends away from the family)  
Be safety conscious at all times/ Live to the fullest/ Remember that I am a force

6. Do you use triads to evaluate or assess your position or progress?

Yes. I use Closer to my Goal/ Further from my Goal/ or the Same  
I also use More/ Less/or the Same

7. Do you use triads when confronted by difficult life problems, crisis, or confusion?

Yes. Usually the first thing I do after a crisis is make a triad.

8. Does using a triad ever help you to change your way of responding, doing something different than your first impulse would lead you to do?

No

9. Do you have a life triad?

Yes. Friends/ Travel/ School

10. Any other triads?

I make up triads when doing an important action or when I feel I need one.

Marisa is a little short on examples, so I'm including two quotes from times other than during the interview:

"I'm starting to think in triads. When that car shone its headlights on us as we rowed out to the boat, I thought, Are they doing that to Help, Harm or be Neutral?"

"Mom, do you have a triad for rowing out at night with the kids?

Mine is:   Make sure the kids have their life jackets on  
          Be ready with the light to shine toward other boats  
          Be ready to help with the boarding onto the boat."

Interview/Questionnaire

Todd Londagin

Age 15

1. How long have you known about triads?

Eleven years

2. How often would you say you use triads?

Several times a week

3. Do you feel triads are helpful to you? How?

Yes, triads are helpful to me. They keep me pointed towards things I want to accomplish, and they make it harder for me to get side tracked onto unimportant points.

4. Do you use basic triads in your everyday life?

yes

5. Do you use triads in planning projects or how to reach a goal?

Yes

6. Do you use triads to evaluate or assess your position or progress?

Definitely, in finding out whether I'm Better/ Worse/ Same

7. Do you use triads when confronted by difficult life problems, crisis, or confusion?

I try to, but sometimes I forget and that makes the situation difficult to get out of.

8. Does using a triad ever help you to change your way of responding, doing something different than your first impulse would lead you to do?

Sometimes. In chess, sometimes I want to make a move and then I remember my triad, and I see a better move. Defend/ Attack/ Reposition is one I use

9. Do you have a life triad?

Yes I have a life triad. It is: To make my living off of playing music and entertaining/ to have good friends/ to pursue my hobbies

10. Any other triads?

Yes there are but I don't remember them at the moment.

Interview/Questionnaire

Ingrid Lucille Pearlman

Age 21

1. How long have you known about triads?

About twelve years

2. How often do you use triads?

I would say about 80% of the time.

3. Do you feel triads are helpful to you? How?

Yes. Because so many elements come up in your mind that only by settling on three can you really get a focus going. I find sometimes though I have to pick five to get them all in. (often in a case like that, if you make subtriads for each of the main points, they all fit)

4. Do you use basic triads in your everyday life?

Yes

5. Do you use triads in planning a project or how to reach a goal?

Yes. I think about the most important elements, and reduce or subtriad.

6. Do you use triads to evaluate your position or progress?

Not as much as I use them in planning.

7. Do you use triads when confronted with crisis or confusion?

Yes

8. Does using triads ever help you to change your way of responding, doing something different than your first impulse would lead you to do?

Yes. It allows you to think logically and not get so confused with the breakdown.

9. Do you have a life triad?

Yes. 1.Performing a)Dancing b) Singing c) Drumming  
2. Friends  
3. Money

10. Any other triads ?

For living in New York City:

Safety / Support / Performing

For Todd (her 15 year old cousin who is living with her and performs with her):

Safety / Education / Entertainment

Safety on the streets:

Kooks / Cars / Falling Objects

.....are a few other triads !



Interview/Questionnaire

Donna Londagin.

AGE 38

1. How long have you known about triads?

Fifteen years

2. How often do you use triads?

Daily

3. Do you feel triads are helpful to you?

Yes helpful - defines my goals and how to approach them. Helps me to problem solve in a practical way. Helps me locate myself internally.

4. Do you use basic triads in your everyday life?

When confronted with something new or confusing but largely the basic triads - Block/ Assist/ Neutral; Participate/ Redirect/ Leave - I have internalized into quick responses and decisions that I do not "talk" to myself beforehand.

5. Do you use triads in planning a project or how to reach a goal?

Definitely. I find it gives me balance and perspective.

6. Do you use triads to evaluate or assess your position or progress?

Yes. but I probably don't evaluate as often as I should. It is usually triggered by an emotional high or low.

7. Do you use triads when confronted by difficult life problems, crisis or confusion?

Yes. Especially then, originally mostly them.

8. Does using a triad ever help you to change your way of responding, doing something different than your first impulse would lead you to do?

When I am deeply struggling and can remember the triad it allows me to change myself.

9. Do you have a life triad?

Yes. Deep personal relationship/ Power, Communion, Security (these are from the nine points)/ Emotional Clarity

Also: Being / Gallantry/ Preparing for death

10. Any other triads?

They are endless and used by me to approach all problems, emotional upsets, goals and life evaluations. My use of triads is based upon the emotional necessity to understand

what is happening - otherwise I am in flow and motion and do not stop to analyze or define triadically.

(She uses triads especially "when worried about failure, when related to security, at times of major 'forks' in her life".)

Interview/Questionnaire

Leslie Ronald

Age 34

1. How long have you known about triads?

Fifteen years

2. How often do you use triads?

I use triads on a daily basis.

3. Do you feel triads are helpful to you?

Yes, triads are extremely helpful to me. By nature I do not enjoy, nor am good at thinking practically. Triads have become a way to easily break problems into simpler elements.

4. Do you use basic triads in your everyday life?

Yes. Asking if I'm being approached to Give/ Take/ Share comes up most often, also breaking down problems-situations into three elements is frequent. Examples: I'm feeling frustrated by being kept waiting, do I Leave/ Demand Attention/ or Resign myself and keep waiting. I'm having trouble collecting money for a job do I Insist on the Full Amount / Settle for Part/ or Just Give up

5. Do you use triads in planning a project or how to reach a goal?

Yes, especially when there are many stages and/or other people involved in a project. I will make an over-all triad defining the project or goal, and also use triads while figuring out the plan on paper.

6. Do you use triads to evaluate or assess your position or progress?

Yes. Am I getting Closer/ Further/ Same distance to my goal is especially useful, also Better/ Worse/ Same.

7. Do you use triads when confronted by difficult life problems, crisis or confusion?

Definitely. These situations are where I almost always use triads when I am desperate. If I'd remembered to use triads before crisis and confusion, I probably would've avoided becoming so desperate. The Leave/ Redirect/ Participate triad is always helpful in these situations.

8. Does using a triad ever help you to change your way of responding, doing something different than your first impulse would lead you to do?

Yes, basic approach triads (Give/ Take/ Share - Block/ Assist/ Neutral) have many times changed my impulse to brush someone off into looking at them, and often assisting them. Also reminding myself that I'm attempting to build a relationship, will change the way I

speaking to them from my first impulse.

9. Do you have a life triad?

My deepest life triad is Freedom/ Love/ Power. In my life I want to maintain the Freedom I have, increase my capacity to give and receive Love, and learn the Power of affecting myself and my environment.

10. Any other triads?

Yes there are many other triads I use. Also, I didn't mention how useful subtriads are in planning things on paper. A current life triad: Music/ Assisting Friends/ Exploring

Interview/Questionnaire

Rodger Doncaster

Age 37

1. How long have you known about triads?

Four years

2. How often would you say you use triads?

Daily

3. Do you feel triads are helpful to you?

Yes. Makes me think more about the project I am involved in, i.e. makes me consider more aspects than just one or two. Lets me know what the focus of my day is. If I have two things, I try to find the third to go with them.

4. Do you use basic triads in your everyday life?

Sometimes. I use them more as I practice using them.

5. Do you use triads in planning projects or how to reach a goal?

I use them in planning projects , not in reaching goals. i.e. To use the generator on the boat I built a shelter where it was: Sheltered from elements/ Not going to start a fire/ Easy to access

6. Do you use triads to assess your position or progress?

Occasionally, I still rely upon emotional reaction most often.

7. Do you use triads when confronted by difficult life problems, crisis, or confusion?

Yes, I do, but usually with the help of others.

8. Does using a triad ever help you to change your way of responding, doing something different than your first impulse would lead you to do?

Yes. I use it to remind myself what it is I'm going to do. When placing objects I look for the third force. It reminds me to take a second look at what I'm doing, and ask am I done?

9. Do you have a life triad?

No.

10. Any other triads?

When I make a time to create a triad for the day, I aim to include three centers (three parts of self) - Moving, Emotional, Intellectual. I may also try to make it one for me, one for

the group, and one for the Community.

When I have something to do I try to break it down into its component parts i.e. to tie up the boat:

tie the lines/ check the lines/ get approval for the ties.

(A problem with a lot of Rodger's triads is that although they cover three points, they often are not all connected with the forces involved. For example, his triad about tying the boat is based on having tied the boat under someone else's directions, and has little to do with the forces involved in securing a boat. A better starting triad, based on the forces involved, would be: To secure the boat against: wind/ waves/ tide. By looking at these three forces, you would determine all the lines needed, placement, tension, protection, etc.

Another example of poor triad making is his triads for fire safety. A triad must be made each time a fire is started on the boat - heater, stove, etc. Rodger's triads generally have two points involving fire safety and the third related to what the fire will accomplish e.g. Clear the area/ Have fire extinguisher nearby/ Heat the room.

I give these examples to show the difficulty many people face, at first, in coming up with three points or forces all related.

On the other hand, his triad for the generator housing was very good.)

Interview/Questionnaire

Linda Schlechter

Age 44

1. How long have you known about triads?

Four years

2. How often would you say you use triads?

Every time there's a big decision for me to make. Once every two weeks.

3. Do you feel triads are helpful to you - if so, How?

Yes, because they make absolute sense to me that I have three choices and things are not just black and white.

4. Do you use basic triads in your everyday life?

Not everyday - but it's incorporated into my way of thinking and I try to use them.

5. Do you use triads in planning projects or planning how to reach a goal?

Yes, especially when it comes to a job or the future.

6. Do you use triads to evaluate or assess your position or progress?

Not as much as I use them for decision making.

7. Do you use triads when confronted by difficult life problems, crisis, or confusion?

Mostly I use them when I'm confused -sometimes I don't use them when I'm in a panic of crisis, but I try to.

8. Does using a triad ever help you to change your way of responding, doing something different than your first impulse would lead you to do?

Yes, instead of going by impulse I think in a more practical way.

9. Do you have a life triad?

Yes. Higher Love/ Liberation/ Harmony

10 Any other triads?

These are the basic ones I work with.

Interview/Questionnaire

Marti Knapp

Age 44

1. How long have you known about triads?

Four years

2. How often would you say you use triads?

1-2 times a week

3. Do you feel triads are helpful to you - if so, How?

They help to make decisions more easily, less stressfully; help me to think clearer - go to the meat of a situation

4. Do you use basic triads in your everyday life?

Yes, usually Better/ Worse/ Same

5. Do you use triads in planning projects or planning how to reach a goal?

Not often - only when helped by others versed in triadic thinking, they are harder for me to apply to planning at this point.

6. Do you use triads to evaluate or assess your position or progress?

Occasionally two or three times per year

7. Do you use triads when confronted by difficult life problems, crisis, or confusion?

Often - weekly to make minor and major decisions , especially in crisis or confusion

8. Does using a triad ever help you to change your way of responding, doing something different than your first impulse would lead you to do?

Yes - it helps me come to a conclusion or arrive at a solution to a problem much sooner - normally I would deliberate much longer on an issue and make a decision by default

9. Do you have a life triad?

Creativity/ Closeness with more People/ Discipline

10. Any other triads?

Closer/ Further/ Neutral



Interview /Questionnaire

Harrison M. Terrell

Age 32

1. How long have you known about triads?

Twelve years

2. How often would you say you use triads?

Monthly

3. Do you feel triads are helpful- to you - if so, How?

Triads help me to seek and find creative solutions to problems. Example: If I were unable to - for reasons beyond my control - continue flying for a living would there be another alternative or would it be a question of flying or not flying? Well of course the bridge between these two is something in a related aviation field.

Triads help me think fast, for example I was trapped on a bus once with a very drunk person. I felt threatened. The more and more tense I got the less and less I was problem solving with my head. So I used Participate/ Redirect/ Leave and identified the possibilities related to each of these points. As soon as I knew my options , I felt more in control.

4. Do you use basic triads in your every day life?

No, not every day

5. Do you use triads in planning projects or planning to reach a goal?

Yes, my most recent example is working up a syllabus for a ground school course, the details seemed overwhelming until I put them into a Pilot/ Aircraft/ Airspace framework.

6. Do you use triads to evaluate or assess your position or progress?

No- not on a conscious level- I'm more emotionally centered - my body tells me how I'm doing, or what I should be doing - through dreams, feelings and images while in meditation/trance states - Besides how can you know your progress if you don't know exactly where you're going? I could very easily drive myself insane by self deprecation, I never feel that my performance was good enough, fast enough, worthy enough - if I look at it from a logical point of view - As soon as I set a goal down in a A B C D format I start to resist the process.

7. Do you use triads when confronted by difficult life problems crisis, or confusion?

Yes, refer to #3 above. When confused I reach here first and see if I can sort it out -

and then let it sit in the body and try and evaluate.

8. Does using a triad ever help you to change your way of responding, doing something different than your first impulse would lead you to do?

I've been using the Helpful/ Harmful/ Neutral and Block/ Assist/ Neutral triads in Georgia a lot. I'm having to hold a tight secret to help somebody. I'm always asking myself, if I made this statement, which point would the repercussions fall under?

9. Do you have a life triad?

No probably for the same reasons mentioned in #6 above.

10. Any other triads you use or uses of triads not mentioned?

I was given, this thing came into existence through meditation/ dream, what I was looking for in a relationship.

1. the capacity to nurture/be nurtured
2. independence
3. evaluation/questioning

## *Turtle's Quest (A Fable)*

Fall was almost over, and there was a frosty nip in the air. Almost all the leaves had fallen from the trees, and the evergreens stood tall and lonely against the bleak, gray sky.

Bear lumbered slowly along the edge of the forest, searching for a few last grubs and roots before her long winter sleep. She was getting sleepier all the time, and when she came to the lake she decided to lie down for just a little rest. At the edge of the lake she flopped down into the soft grass. She'd been there only a moment when her friend Turtle came swimming along and crawled out onto the muddy shore. He was crying.

"Whatever is the matter?" asked Bear.

"Oh!" cried Turtle, "The Great Tortoise From Under the Lake has stolen my wife and children, and I don't know how I shall ever free them." And he sobbed bitterly.

"I will help you!" cried Bear. "I would go to the ends of the earth to help you, but I do not know what to do any more than you do."

By now it was evening and from the nearby forest glided Owl, flying from her roost in a hollow tree out over the meadow on her night's hunting. As she glided over the lake her keen eyes saw Turtle crying far below her. She swooped round, circling lower and lower, until she perched on a rock right next to Bear and Turtle.

"I gladly interrupt my flight  
To help poor Turtle in his plight  
Now tell me Turtle, in your way  
What is it causes such dismay?"

Turtle explained that his family was being held prisoner by the Great Tortoise From Under The Lake and that he did not know how to free them.

"There is but one thing you can do  
To make old Tortoise listen to you.  
A fruit which to him is so handsome  
You must offer as their ransom  
A fruit which he has never seen  
Nor tasted, even in a dream."

"But how can I ever find such a fruit?" asked Turtle. "I don't know of any fruit the Great Tortoise does not know! He has tasted of everything within the North Country where we live!"

"There is one now close at hand  
Who'll lead you to a far off land  
She's smaller by far than either of you  
Yet a queen is she of brightest hue.  
She knows the Great Sand World of the South  
And there you'll find the prickly plants  
Which have the fruits you need."

"Where is this mysterious queen?" asked Turtle. "I cannot see her!"

"On leaf of green  
You'll find this queen  
She's close by you  
And light as dew.  
Now on this journey you will take,  
To succeed you must a promise make.  
The one who knows the most shall lead -  
To this you must all be agreed.

To-whit To-who

I now leave you."

And Owl flew off across the lake.

"Where do you suppose this queen could be?" asked Bear.

"On a leaf, Owl said, and very tiny, too," replied Turtle. He began to crawl away from the edge of the lake. "There's a big patch of weeds over there, let's go look."

The two approached the milkweed patch. Bear began to plunge between the stalks.

"Wait!" cried Turtle. "She's very small, remember? You may knock her down! Let me look. I can pass between the stalks without disturbing them."

Bear backed slowly and carefully out of the milkweed patch and sat down to watch.

Turtle crept in between the stalks and disappeared. "Try calling her," Bear suggested.

Turtle's voice came from deep in the milkweed patch. "Queen of the leaf! Where are you?"

Under a leaf on the far side of the milkweed patch, a monarch butterfly was emerging from her chrysalis. She pumped her wings, slowly opening them in the evening air. The air was much cooler now than when she had last felt it as a caterpillar three weeks earlier. She realized she would soon be heading South.

Suddenly she heard a dim voice from the midst of the milkweed. "Queen of the leaf! Where are you?"

Who could that be? she wondered, and who is he looking for?

Soon Turtle appeared right under her leaf, still calling, "Queen of the leaf! Where are you?"

"Hello," she called down softly. "Who are you looking for?"

Turtle started, looked left and right. "Where are you?" he asked again.

"Up here, just above you " Butterfly replied.

Turtle looked up and saw her, with wings now almost fully spread, hanging upside down from the remnants of her chrysalis, its golden markings still visible. The evening sun cast its rays across her wings and he thought he had never seen such a beautiful sight. She looked like a crown of jewels.

Turtle murmured, "Owl said, on a leaf I would find her, brightly colored, smaller than Bear or me, and light as dew."

"Find who?" asked Butterfly.

"The Queen who's to lead us to a far away land to find a fruit we've never seen to bring back so I can free my family." Turtle spoke so quickly in his worried state that she could barely catch all his words.

"Well," she said, "I don't know about all that, but I will soon be flying South. It's getting cold here, and I must leave quickly".

"Oh my, oh my," said Turtle, "you MUST be the queen Owl told us about. Can you take us to the Great Sand World?"

"I know the Great Sand World of the South," said Butterfly. "And to help you save your family, I would gladly lead you there."

Turtle led Butterfly back to where Bear was resting. They found her fast asleep.

"Bear, Bear! Wake Up!" shouted Turtle. "I've found the queen! And we must start at once."

Bear opened one eye sleepily. "Oh Turtle, what did you say? I'm so sleepy now."

"Look, Bear, here's the queen who'll lead us to the Great Sand World. We must go at once if I am to save my family."

At the mention of Turtle's family, Bear remembered her agreement, Owl's words, and all the rest. Suddenly she was awake. "Oh, yes!" she cried. "Where's the queen?"

"Here," said Turtle, indicating Butterfly.

"Are you ready?" asked Butterfly.

"Oh, yes, of course!" said Bear.

And so the three of them started South together, Butterfly leading the way, Bear lumbering along and Turtle hurrying as quickly as he could behind them. Sometimes the pace was too much for Turtle. Then he would call out to Bear.

"Bear, I can hardly keep up, don't you think you could carry me?" And then Bear tangled Turtle into the long fur under her belly and carried him.

At night Butterfly would roost in Bear's ear so that she could call to her and wake her in the morning. At first it was very hard for Bear to wake up in the morning and to stay awake. But as they got further South and the weather grew warmer, she felt less sleepy every day.

One day the three travelers passed through a swampy forest. Suddenly from behind they heard the barking of hunting dogs. "Oh No!" cried Bear. "They'll get me for sure!" And she ran to the nearest tree and started to climb.

"No! No!" shouted Turtle. "I know what to do! In that tree they will surely corner you. Go for the stream, swim as far downstream as you can, then climb out on the opposite bank and we will find you there. Butterfly and I will stop the dogs."

Bear ran off toward the stream. Turtle could hear the dogs getting closer and closer. Quickly he explained his plan to Butterfly. They hid beside the path and when the dogs appeared, Turtle leaped out and grabbed one dog by the heel, hanging on with his sharp beak. The dog jumped in the air, turning circles and trying to shake Turtle off, yelping in pain. Meanwhile, Butterfly had landed on the other dog's nose and started tickling him in the nose so that he began to sneeze uncontrollably and could not stop. Turtle and Butterfly kept up their attack until the hunters came crashing along the path, wondering what was wrong with their dogs.

As soon as the hunters appeared, Turtle and Butterfly disappeared quickly into the woods, leaving the two dogs yelping and sneezing and totally without the scent of Bear. Downstream on the other bank, they found Bear waiting for them, and had a joyous reunion.

Finally they reached the edge of the Great Sand World of the South. The three friends sat together looking out at the endless sand and thinking about the fruits they needed to find.

"I know how to cut the fruits free with my sharp beak," said Turtle.

"Well, I know how to find them by flying high over the sand," said Butterfly.

"I know how to carry them back by tangling them in my long fur," said Bear.

"We each know one part of what 's needed to get the fruits ," said Butterfly.

"Then we should all be partners, since none knows more than the others," explained Turtle.

They spent many days in the Great Sand World following their plan. Butterfly would fly high above the sand until she spotted one of the prickly plants, then point the way to the others. Turtle would cut the fruits free with his sharp beak, and Bear tangled them in the long fur of her underbelly. They always took only a few from each plant, leaving the rest for the animals of the Great Sand World, and for the plant to make seeds.

One day as they rested near one of the prickly plants, a big wind began to blow. Sand was lifted up and blown by the wind. Turtle became frightened. "I can't breathe!" he cried. "Sand is filling my nose and eyes."

Butterfly, clinging to the edge of the prickly plant, was frightened too. "I can barely hold on," she said, "I'll be blown away!"

Bear, totally calm, spoke softly but with a strong voice. "I know what to do. Don't worry, you'll both be safe. Butterfly, climb into my ear as you used to when we were coming South. Turtle, crawl into my fur among the fruits."

And as they did so, Bear lay down with her back to the wind, curled up in a ball, and



covered her nose and eyes with her paws. The wind howled and raged. Sand blew so thick that the fur on Bear's back became full of it, but all three friends were safe in the protection of Bear's plan.

Many weeks passed as they wandered over the Great Sand World gathering the fruits of the prickly plants. Finally, Bear could carry no more, and Butterfly felt it was time to head back North. They left the Great Sand World and made the long trek back to the North Country.

At last they arrived again at the lake where Turtle's family was held captive. Spring was in the air, birds chirped happily, and the flowers had begun to bloom. The three friends approached the lake. "What should we do now?" asked Bear.

"I know what to do," replied Turtle. "You swim to the middle of the lake and drop the fruits out of your fur into the water. I will swim down and confront the Great Tortoise."

Turtle waded into the water and disappeared beneath the surface. Butterfly lit on a nearby leaf to watch. Bear obediently swam to the center of the lake and shook all the fruits loose from her fur. They sank down below her, and she swam back to the shore and waited with Butterfly.

With fear in his heart, Turtle approached the lair of the Great Tortoise. What if the Great Tortoise were not pleased with the fruits? All their struggle and effort, all that distance traveled in vain! He could not think that way now, he decided, and taking a deep breath, he called out, "Oh, Great Tortoise, I have something rare and special for you!"

A loud rumbling came from deep within the lake and suddenly the Great Tortoise appeared, looming over Turtle. "What do you bring?" he thundered.

"I bring you a fruit so rare, one that you have never seen." Turtle tried to sound brave, but his voice was shaking.

"A new fruit? There is no fruit in these parts which I have not seen!"

“This comes from a far distant land,” Turtle replied. He held out a piece of one of the fruits.

The Great Tortoise took the piece of fruit and ate it in one gulp. For a moment he was silent. To Turtle it seemed an endless wait. Would the Great Tortoise like the fruits?

“This is marvelous! I must have more! Where can I get these?” The Great Tortoise’s voice was still loud and commanding, but now Turtle felt confident. He knew he had what the Great Tortoise wanted.

“I have many of these fruits,” he said calmly.

“What do you want for them? I must have them at once!” shouted the Great Tortoise, a bit impatiently.

“I ask only that you free the turtle family which you are holding captive, and I will give you all the fruits you can eat,” replied Turtle.

“So be it!” roared the Great Tortoise.

Soon Bear and Butterfly saw Turtle’s head appear above the surface of the water, followed by another head, then another, and another, and another. They all climbed out onto the shore – Turtle, his wife, and their three children. Oh, how happy they all were! A great party was held on the shore of the lake that afternoon, celebrating their reunion.

Over at the edge of the woods, from the hollow tree, Owl heard the commotion and, opening one eye, saw Turtle and his family dancing on the shore with Bear and Butterfly.

Through distance, enemy and storm  
As leader each one took a turn.  
And when all knew the same amount  
As partners then themselves did count,  
Together as a group succeeded,  
When none alone could have completed.

To-Whit To-Whoo  
Our Tale is Through."

My hope is that this tool of thinking in triads will be tried and used by an ever growing number of teachers and children, that their parents and communities in turn will be influenced and that they will find, as we have, a greatly enhanced thinking process, leading to more self-fulfillment and more ability to positively affect the lives of those they care about.