



## The 3 Vital Questions®: Transforming Workplace Drama

### **Introduction:**

One of the most powerful things we can do is to be conscious of how we think, act, and interact. Only then can we be aware of and choose the ways we prefer and engage in practices that help—rather than hinder—us in achieving our desired outcomes. The 3 Vital Questions® model support us in doing this.

The model was developed by David Emerald and Donna Zajonc (pronounced **Zay**-john). It is based on David's book, *3 Vital Questions: Transforming Workplace Drama* and has helped countless individuals and teams to engage in productive and powerful interaction.

The questions are:

1. Where am I putting my focus: on problems or on outcomes?
2. How am I relating to myself, to others and to the realities of the world around me? From drama or from empowerment?
3. What actions am I taking to realize my desired outcomes?

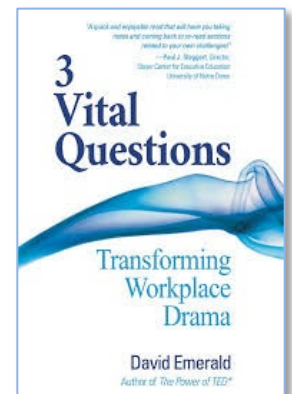


These questions, and the ideas they generate, can contribute to your success in many dimensions:

1. Personal development and leadership
2. Coaching and mentoring others
3. Leading and participating in teams
4. Leading an organization

The 3 Vital Questions® are applicable to all aspects of your life, not just work. We hope you'll find them useful everywhere you go.

We have prepared an introduction to the 3 Vital Questions®, which consists of three short videos and two exercises, which you will find below in this document.



### **Instructions:**

You will find links to the videos below. Please watch them in preparation for our session and do the exercises that follow videos one and two. Your worksheet contains an additional exercise for Question 3, which we will do in class.

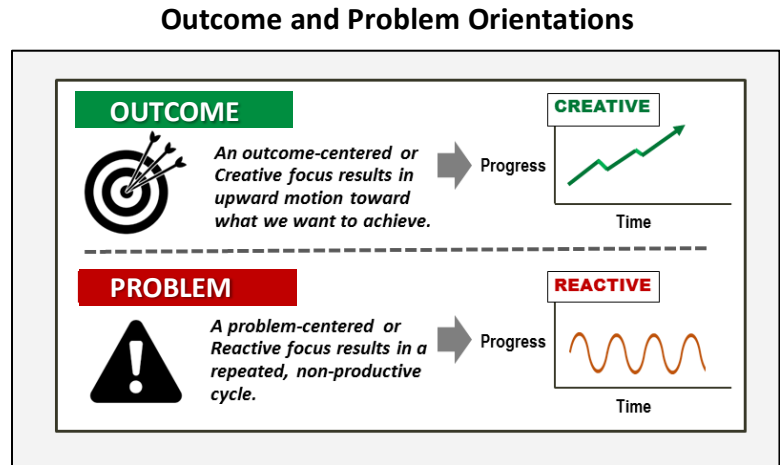


## Question 1: Where am I placing my focus?

**VIDEO ONE:** Click this link and play the first video. <https://maverickandboutique.com/f-35-bridging-the-gap/>

### EXERCISE ONE:

We can choose whether to place our focus on our desired outcomes and how we might realize them, or on problems and the challenges preventing us from achieving our goals. When we choose the former—an outcome or “Creative” orientation—we participate in a virtuous cycle that aligns with our desired future. The latter leads inevitably to a vicious cycle of sub-optimal performance and the repeated missing of goals.



## Outcome Orientation Exercise

The purpose of this exercise is to practice holding a Creative orientation and envisioning what you want to create or make happen. This may be harder to do than you think. Take your time, build your vision one detail at a time, and then appreciate what you’ve made.

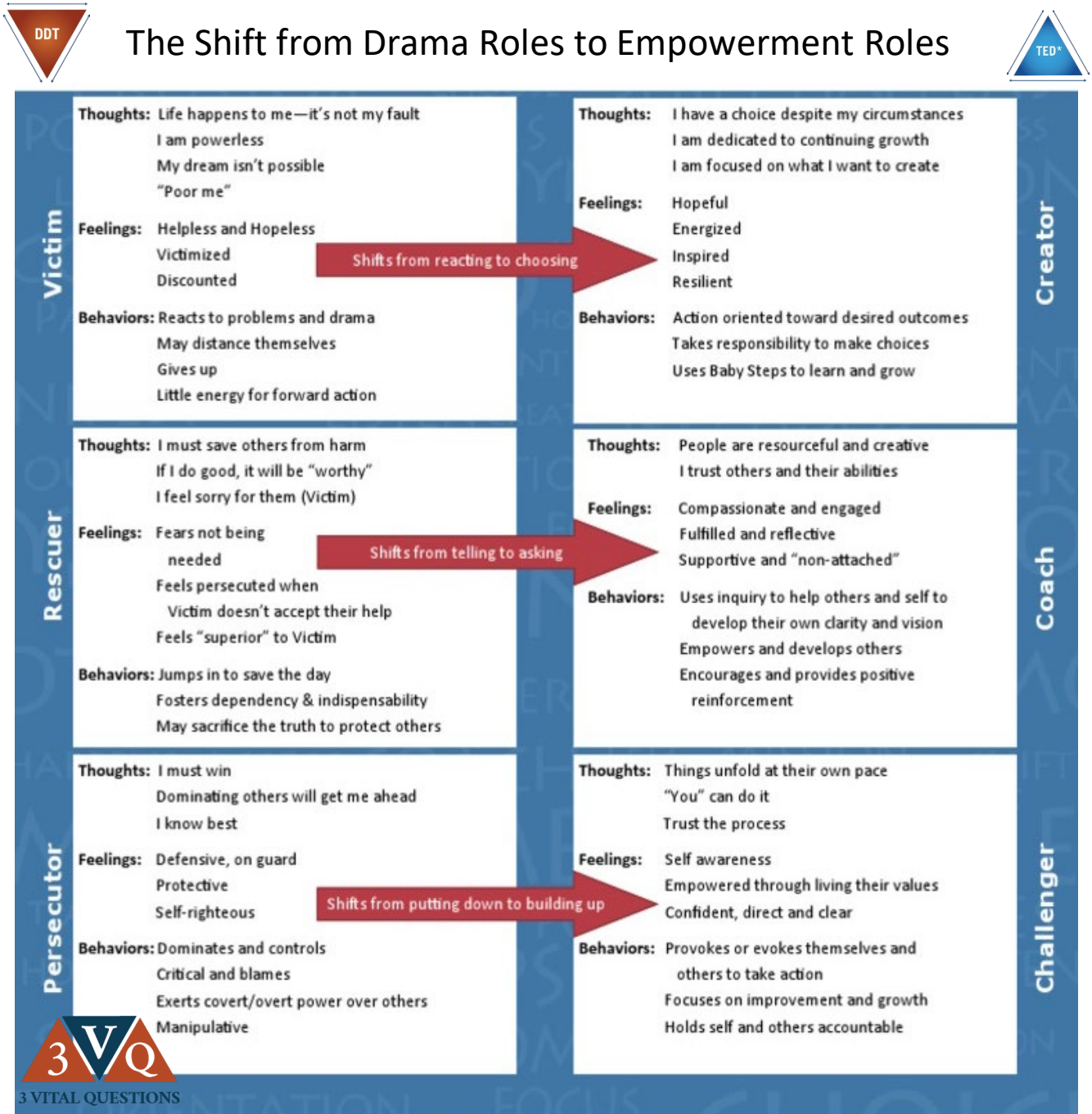
- 1. Think of something you would love to create.** An aspect of your job, a relationship, a vacation home...anything you’re passionate about and engages your imagination. Write down what it is. Think of it as the title for your vision, e.g. “My New Team” or “My Dream Home”.
- 2. Now describe in minute detail what it will be like when you have realized your goal.** What will be happening? Who will be there? What will you and they be doing? How will you feel? If you’re envisioning a thing such as a home, describe everything you can about it. Be as specific as you can; for example, what is it like to wake up and have breakfast there? Whatever inspires you. Use as much space as you need. Also, be aware of how you feel as you do this exercise and make some notes about that as well. You’ll probably need more space, so use additional paper or a journal to capture your thoughts.

Question 2: How am I relating to myself, to others and to the realities of the world around me?

**VIDEO TWO:** Please play second video in the series.

**EXERCISE TWO:**

Take a few moments to reflect on where drama is playing out in your work life, and how you might make a shift to The Empowerment Dynamic. The chart below, provided for reference, describes the shifts from Drama roles to Empowerment roles. Please record your thoughts below and be prepared to share in class.



## The Shift from Drama to Empowerment Worksheet

1. Drama role(s) I notice myself playing and the context it/they show up in:

How might I shift to the Empowerment Dynamic? What might I say or do differently?

2. Drama role(s) I notice others playing:

How might I support others in shifting to the Empowerment Dynamic. How might I engage with others as a Teacher/Challenger or Coach?

Question 3: What actions am I taking to realize my desired outcomes?

**VIDEO THREE:** Please play third video in the series

**NOTE:** There is no prework exercise to do for this section.

Here is the Creative Tension Method described in Video Three. We'll be working with this model in class to support you in realizing your desired outcome on one or more topics.

## Creative Tension Method



Spend some time reflecting on the following questions. Capture your ideas in the space provided. Feel free to make more extensive notes in a journal or elsewhere.

1. **My desired outcome:** Thinking about the outcome you described in Exercise One on this worksheet (or another if you prefer), please give a short description of what you envision.
2. **My current reality:** Where am I now in relation to my desired outcome? Where do I stand right now, without judgement...just the facts?
3. **My assets:** What assets do I have that I might leverage to achieve my desired outcome, i.e., people, funds, skills, etc.
4. **My challenges:** What challenges do I face, and how might I turn them into/reframe them as opportunities for moving toward my desired outcome?
5. **First steps:** What are the first steps I will take toward achieving my outcome? Please be specific: include a detailed description of what you will do by when and resources you will need, including anyone who might help you stay accountable to taking the action you outline here. *These must be actions you can take in the next 30-60 days and be 100% owned by you.*

**Step 1:**

**Step 2:**

**Step 3:**

**Step 4:**

**Step 5:**