

The Unhelpful Helper

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Weekly Tips and Tools to Transform Drama and Rediscover Your
True Creator Essence

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It's a wonderful thing to want to help others. Thank goodness there are many in this world who are sensitive, caring, and helpful people. However, if your constant focus is to be a helper, you may pay a heavy cost personally and professionally to realize later that you may not be helping after all.

The Rescuer is one of the three roles that make up the **Dreaded Drama Triangle (DDT)**. The Rescuer role most aligns itself with the "helper." When rooted in the helper identity, your attention goes first and foremost to the needs of others, rather than your own needs. In fact, you may not even acknowledge that you have needs and instead feel the weight of the world resting on your shoulders. You may also feel that you are the only one who can fix things and, if you don't do it, no one else will.

The combination of these beliefs animates the helper identity (we're describing helping and rescuing as a way of being, and not professional rescuers such as firefighters and emergency workers who are essential to our civil society).

Being a helper is culturally acceptable, which attracts positive feedback and reinforces the cycle of helping and fixing. As a helper, you may relish the attention and accolades you receive. Privately though, you may feel resentful because you give everything to others and often do not receive the love and sense of belonging that you desire in return.

This approach to life describes the unhelpful helper for which there are considerable professional and personal costs. Here are a few:

- Carrying the weight of the world on your shoulders can cause you to overwork, feel tired, and even burned out.
- The needs of others are always more important than your needs, so you don't take time for self-care and to regenerate your spirit.
- By remaining focused on helping others, you do not show your true self or speak your authentic voice.
- You may unknowingly communicate a message that others are incapable of managing their own life, slowing their ability to cope with challenging situations.
- Others may shirk their responsibilities and even behave badly if you do for them what is really theirs to do.
- You may feel lonely, isolated, and even hopeless when you are unable to redirect your helping habit.

Reading this list, you may be shocked at the costs of being a helper at the expense of your well-being. It can also be heartbreaking to realize that your desire to be helpful may be unknowingly disempowering the ones you most want to support.

If any of these descriptions sound familiar to you, spend some time reflecting on your motivations behind your helping identity. If this list does not resonate with you, have compassion for those who are

facing this arduous challenge. Here are a few tips that can assuage the helping cycle:

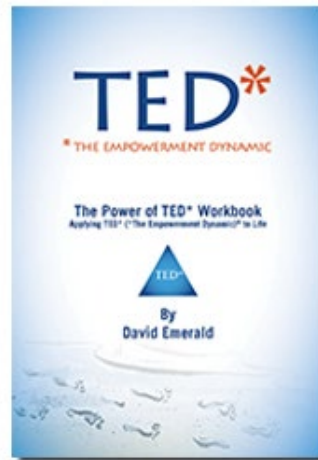
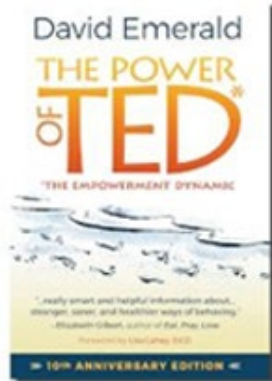
1. See others as Creators, whether they act like it or not. As Creators, leave the power with them to ask for help.
2. Embrace silence and listen deeply, creating a space absent of helping advice. This allows others to consider what they want, rather than being told what they should do or want.
3. Learn to ask for support and notice if uncomfortable feelings arise when you do ask. This is good! It means you are recognizing your own needs and when you want support.
4. Create moments of genuine self-care. Start with something simple like more work breaks or a quiet afternoon walk. This helps to redirect your constant focus on others.

Discerning the difference between being supportive and over-giving as an unhelpful helper is a demanding journey. Instead of always turning toward others, turn inward toward yourself and know that you can support others without depleting your own energy.

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