

Polarity Thinking: An Innovative Strategy to Advance Leadership Teams, Education, and Improve Practice

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Educating students to shape their lives, their professions, and their societies.



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Thank you



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Unsolvable Problems in Healthcare: An Introduction to Polarities



Introduction & Background

Tensions in healthcare globally

- World Health Organization 10 threats ¹
- Lack of preparedness ²
- Health Policy
- Delivery Systems
- Roles & Entry level/Scope of Practice
- Culture
- Quality



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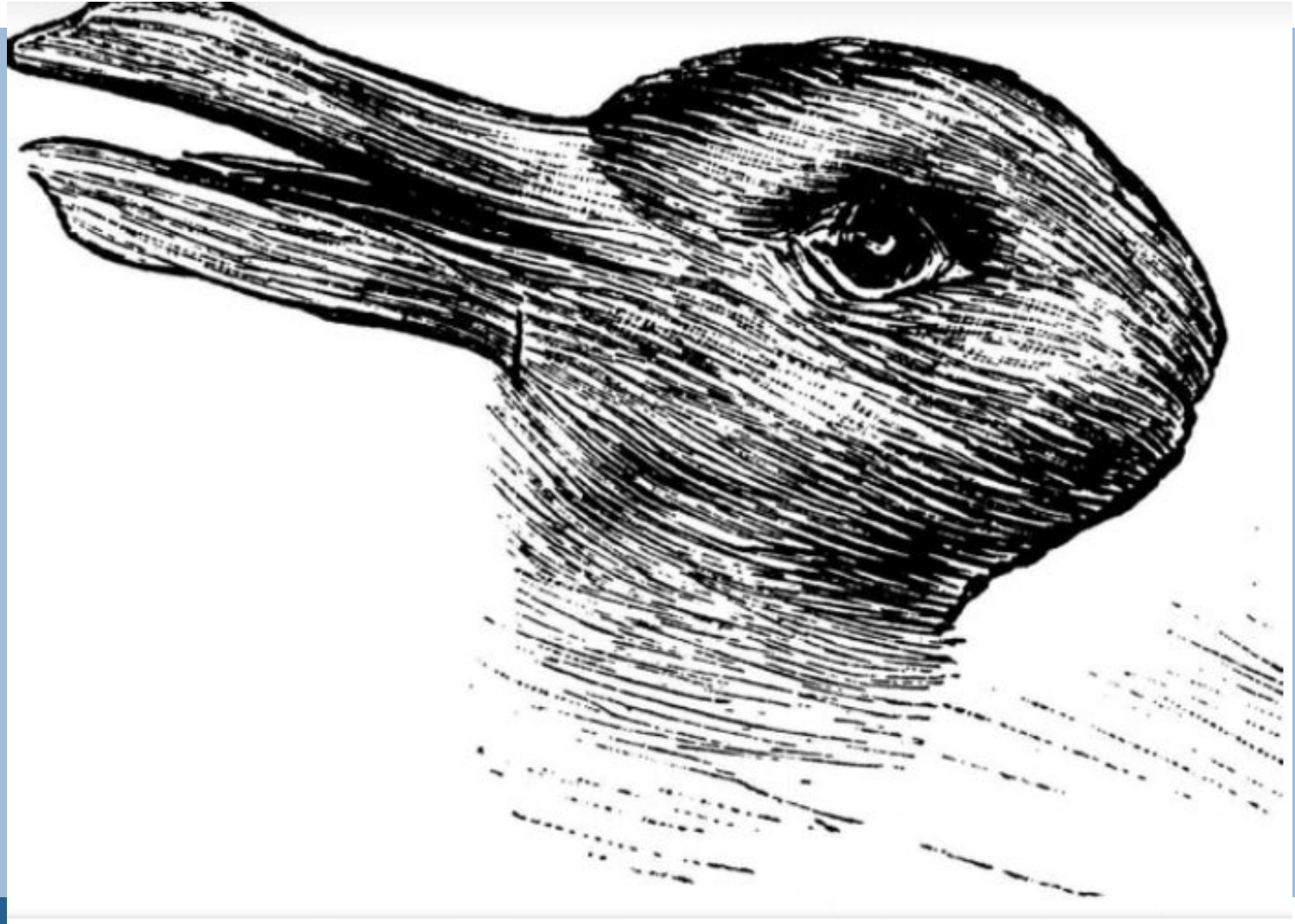
Common Themes

- Complex
- No one simple answer
- Significant impact
- Multiple points of view



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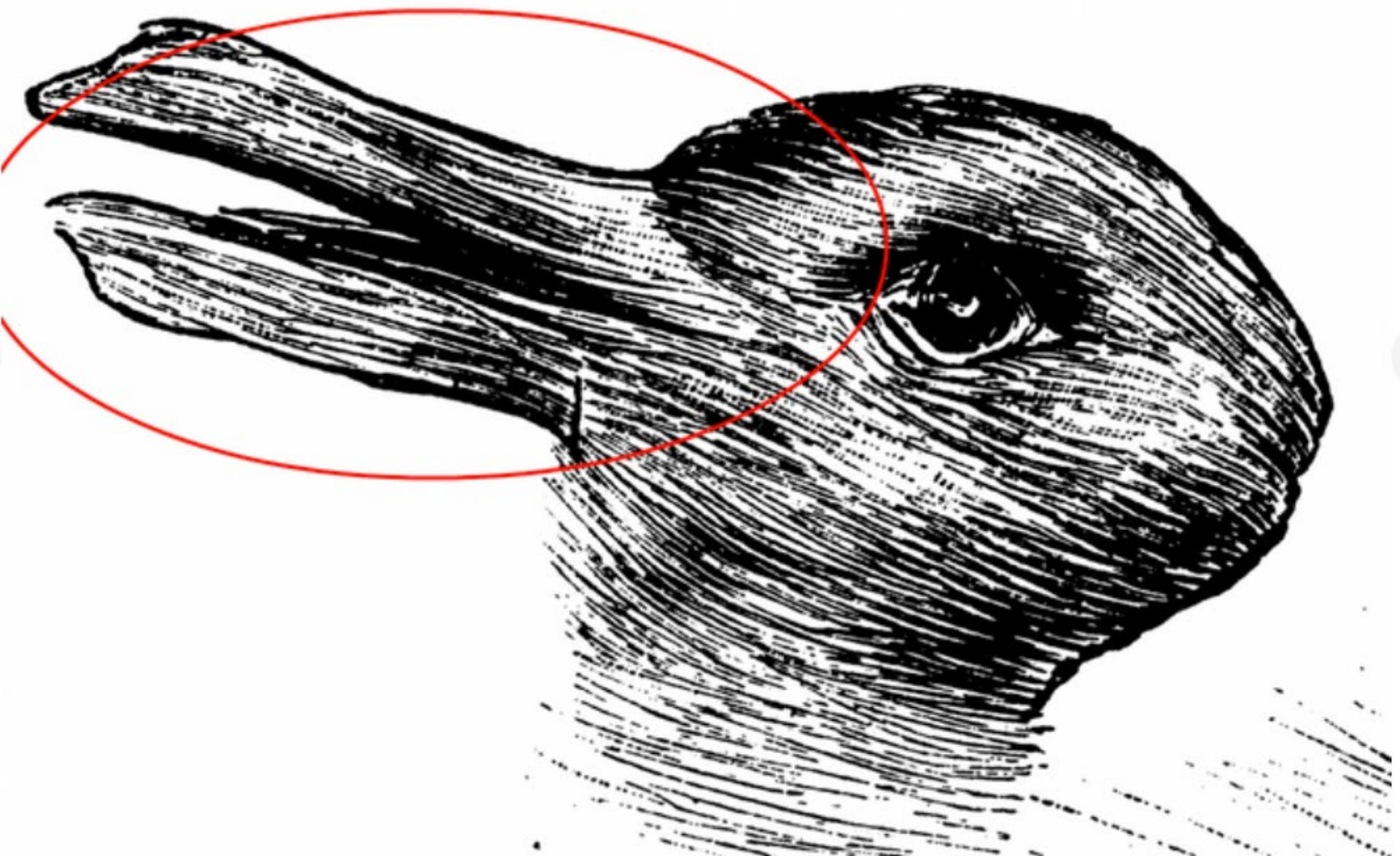


What do you see?



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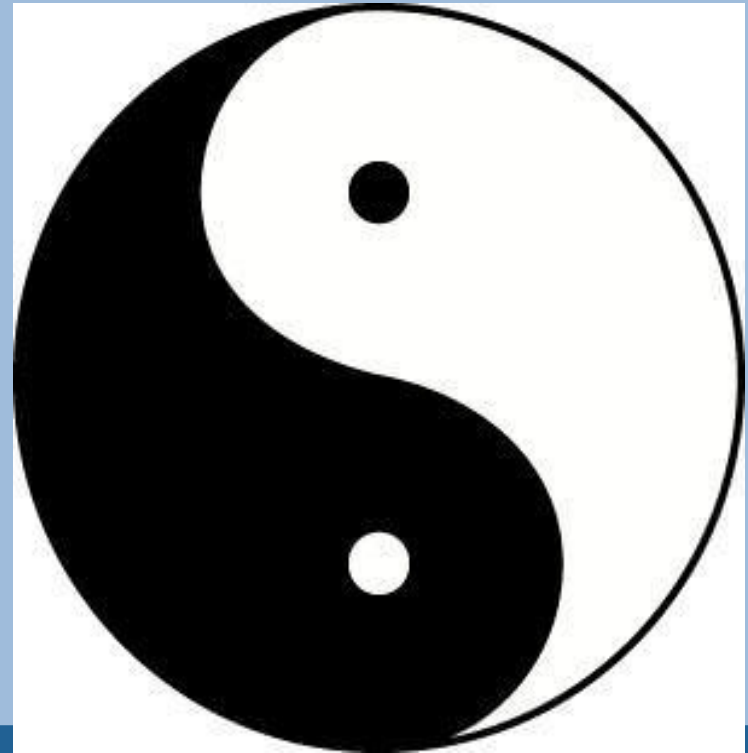


Historical Perspective

- Ardhanari from Hindu tradition 5000 + years ago



- Yin & Yang from Taoism 2,500 years ago



More Recent Thinking

- “And” thinking ³
- Paradox, dilemma, tension ^{4, 5}
- Competitive edge ⁶
- Effective leaders ⁶
- Interconnectedness ⁶
- Getting “Unstuck” ⁷



A black and white photograph of Albert Einstein, showing his characteristic wild hair and mustache. He is looking slightly to the right of the camera with a thoughtful expression. His hands are clasped together in front of him. The background is dark and out of focus.

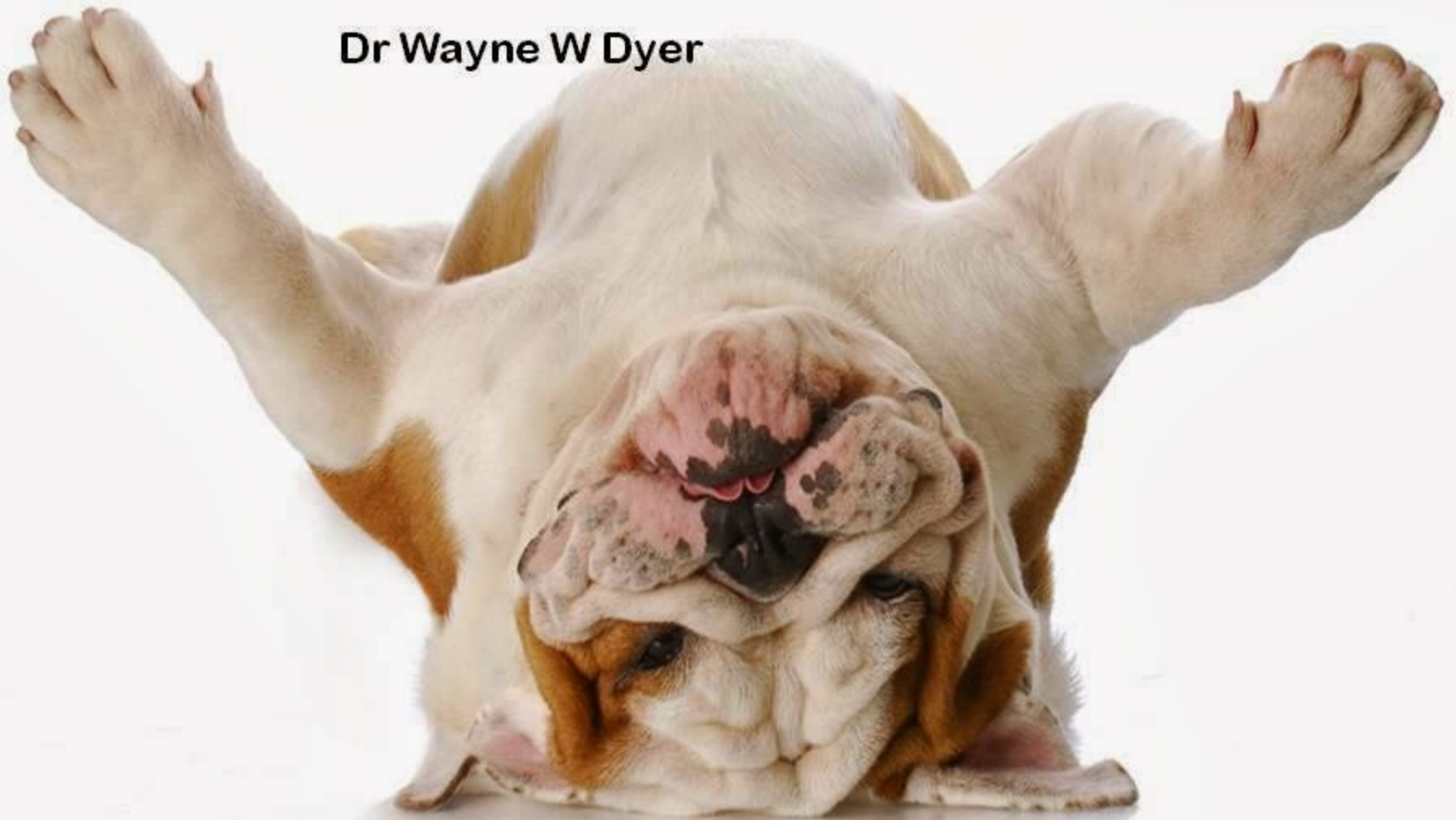
**“NO PROBLEM CAN BE SOLVED FROM THE SAME
LEVEL OF CONSCIOUSNESS THAT CREATED IT.”**

ALBERT EINSTEIN

© Lifehack Quotes

**If you change the way you look at
things the things you look at change.**

Dr Wayne W Dyer



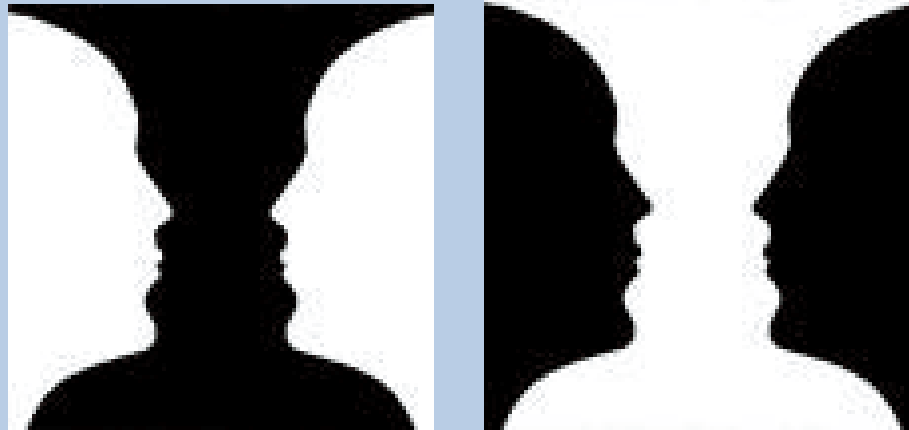
Problem Solving^{4,8}

- A situation, person, or thing that needs attention and needs to be dealt with or solved
- A question in mathematics that needs an answer

(Cambridge Dictionary)



What is a Polarity? ^{5, 6}



- Interdependent values or points of view
- One is not more important or valuable than the other
- Each appears different or opposite but needs each other over time to reach outcomes neither can reach alone (to achieve a greater purpose!)

Problem or Polarity? ⁶

Problem to solve

- Not ongoing, end point
- Solvable
- Independent alternatives
- Contain mutually exclusive opposites (yes/no, now/later, here/there)

Polarity to manage

- Ongoing, no end point
- Not solvable
- Interdependent alternatives
- Contain mutually inclusive opposites (individual and team, compete and collaborate, work life and home life)



Practice

- Should we implement a clean water initiative?
- How should we address the pollution issues?
- Should we focus on patients or staff to improve satisfaction?
- What issues are you facing?



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Slide 3: [Untitled image of Problems]. Retrieved June 8, 2019 from <http://www.stevenconnelly.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/01/problems-1-300x214.jpg>

Slide 6: Rabbit and duck [Online image]. Retrieved June 8, 2019 from <https://www.indy100.com/article/what-do-you-see-in-this-picture-the-answer-says-a-lot-about-your-personality-7316291>

Slide 7: [Untitled image of rabbit and duck circled]. Retrieved June 8, 2019 from <https://www.indy100.com/article/what-do-you-see-in-this-picture-the-answer-says-a-lot-about-your-personality-7316291>

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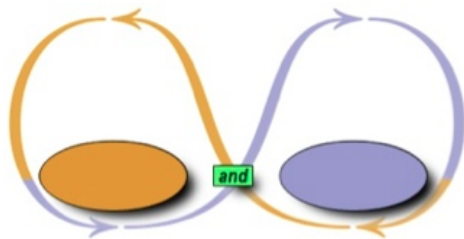
Slide 10: [Untitled image of Albert Einstein and quote]. Retrieved June 8, 2019 from <https://i.pinimg.com/originals/4c/55/a2/4c55a22cc15a374dfa25347218584be9.png>

Slide 11: [Untitled image of dog and Wayne Dyer quote]. Retrieved June 8, 2019 from http://1.bp.blogspot.com/-Kc91yKhIFNk/Uy3E9V7EstI/AAAAAAAAAEM/cb67N6eGIMQ/s1600/543653_10150898896474247_2010449890_n.jpg

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Slide 16: [Untitled image of questions]. Retrieved June 8, 2019 from <http://i0.wp.com/www.nursetheory.com/wp-content/uploads/2012/10/Chalkboard-of-questions.jpg>

Polarity Mapping: A Tool to Advance Leadership and Educational Teams



WHAT ARE POLARITIES?

Polarities are interdependent pairs that support a common purpose and one another. They are energy systems in which we live and work.



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Polarity Thinking and Management

- What are the issues that keep you up at night?
- How do people typically approach these issues?
- Why do so many change initiatives fail or issues reoccur?



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Common Polarities in Leadership

- Directive
- Visionary
- Teamwork
- Task focus
- Stability



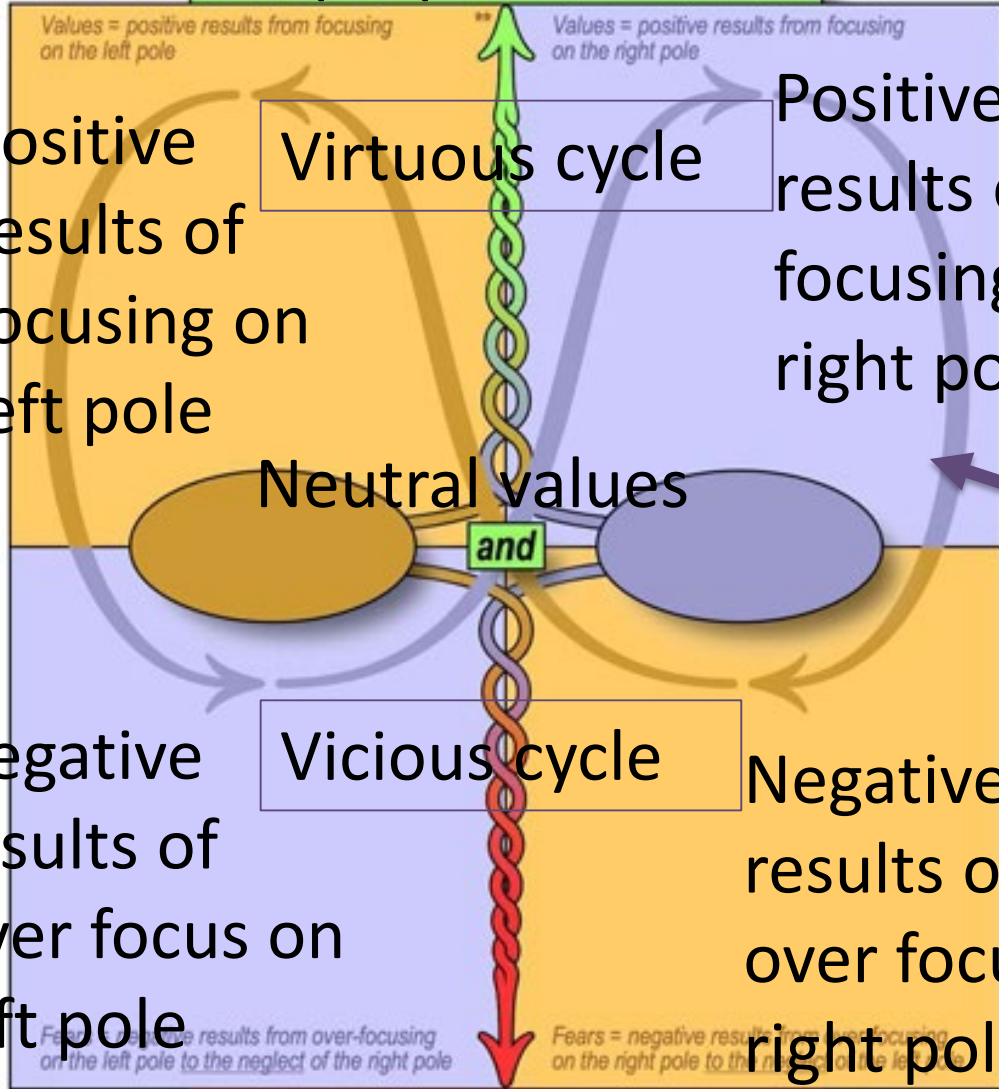
- Participative
- Realist
- Individual work
- Relationship focus
- Change

Common Polarities in Education

- Educator satisfaction
 - Traditional methods
 - Theory - knowing
 - Competition
 - Profession centric
- 
- Student satisfaction
 - Innovative methods
 - Reality - doing
 - Collaboration
 - Interprofessional centric

Polarity Map

Greater Purpose Statement (GPS)* - why balance this polarity?
Greater purpose statement



Action Steps
How will we gain or maintain the positive results from focusing on this right pole? What? Who? By When? Measures?

Specific steps to keep positive results

Infinity loop

Early Warnings
Measurable indicators (things you can count) that will let you know that you are getting into the downside of this right pole.

Specific signs of negative results

Action Steps
How will we gain or maintain the positive results from focusing on this left pole? What? Who? By When? Measures?

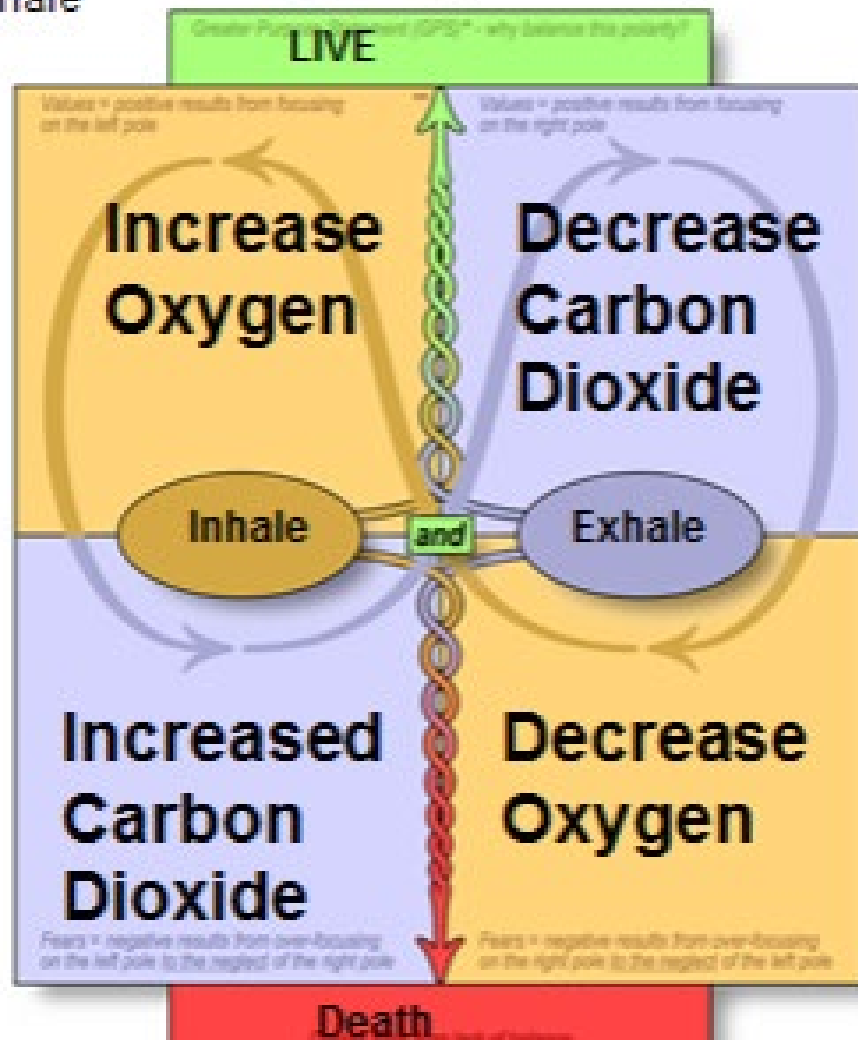
Specific steps to keep positive results

Early Warnings
Measurable indicators (things you can count) that will let you know that you are getting into the downside of this left pole.

Specific signs of negative results

Inhale/Exhale

Polarity Management® Map



A Simple Metaphor

Action Steps

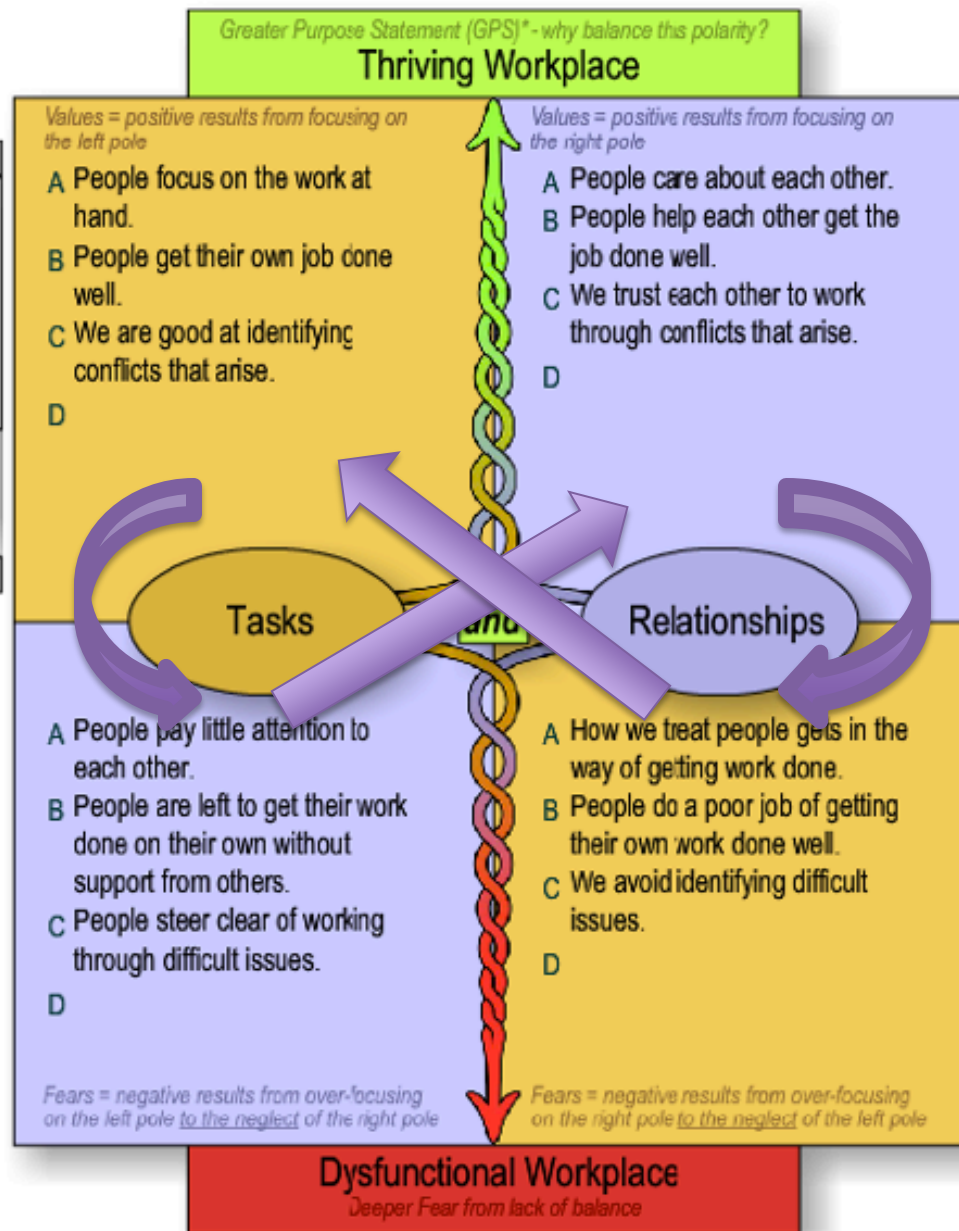
How will we gain or maintain the positive results from focusing on this left pole?
What? Who? By When? Measures?

- 1 Establish clear tasks, quality standards and deadlines for completion.
- 2 Meet weekly with team members to be sure everyone understands what they are expected to do, when and how.
- 3 Reward employees for quality performance delivered in a timely manner.
- 4 Measure how well employees

Early Warnings

Measurable indicators (things you can count) that will let you know you are getting the downside of this left pole.

- 1 People resist supporting one another.
- 2 People won't ask coworkers for help when they need it.
- 3 People say they are not interested in participating in team building or company social events.
- 4



Action Steps

How will we gain or maintain the positive results from focusing on this right pole?
What? Who? By When? Measures?

- 1 Sponsor events for people to get to know one another.
- 2 Provide team building events twice a year.
- 3 Measure how well employees "build and maintain healthy work relationships" on performance reviews.
- 4 Reward employees for developing and maintaining healthy working relationships.

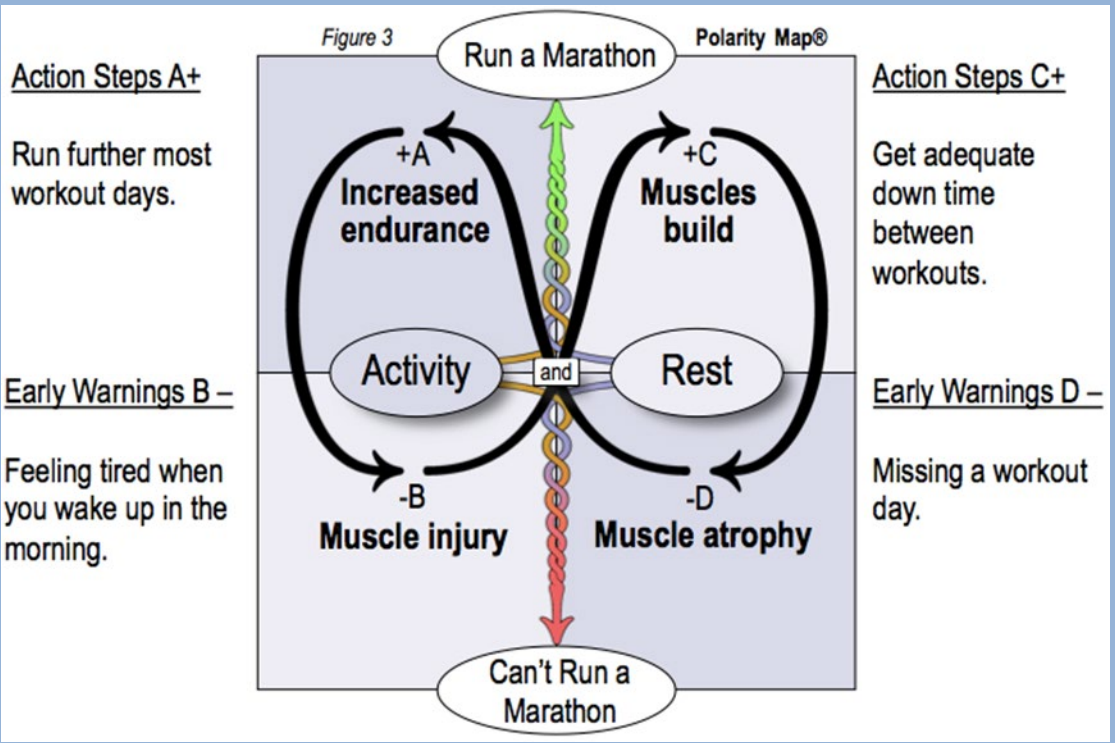
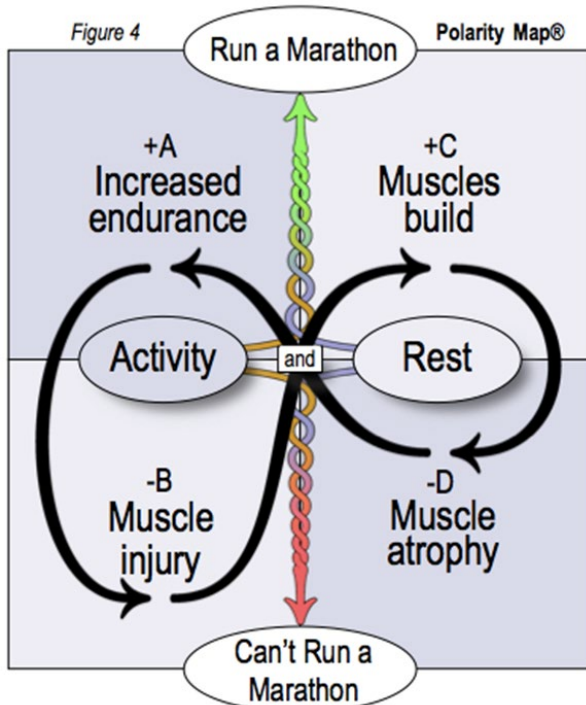
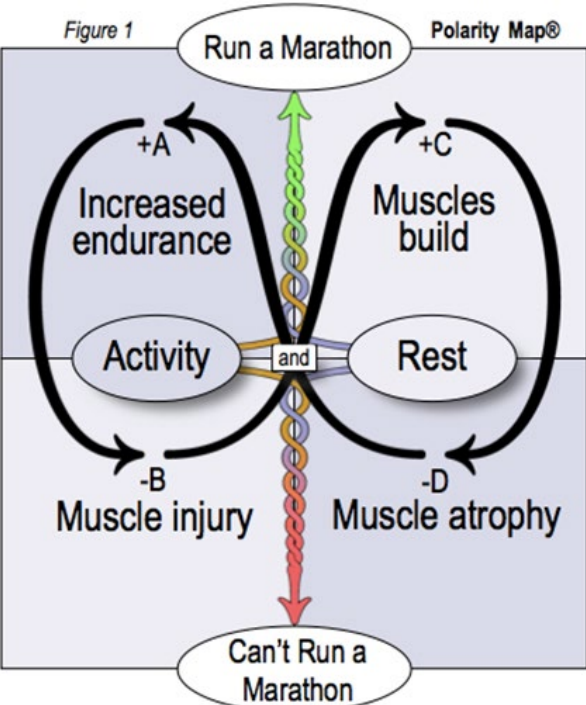
Early Warnings

Measurable indicators (things you can count) that will let you know you are getting the downside of this right pole.

- 1 Employees say they don't know what they are expected to do.
- 2 Performance numbers start to decline.
- 3 When asked, employees cannot articulate how well they are performing against goals and objectives.
- 4

Five Step Process: Think SMALL to go Big!

- Seeing
- Mapping
- Assessing
- Learning
- Leveraging





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Evidence-Based Practices: Polarity Thinking in Practice



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Where is Polarity Thinking Used?

- Education
- Law Enforcement
- Healthcare
- Religious congregations
- Leadership
- Organizations
- Schools
- Communities



Why is Polarity Thinking Needed?

- To get unstuck
- To manage change
 - *“If you want to guarantee the failure of a change effort, tie it to one pole of a polarity. If you want success, tie it to both poles of a polarity.” Barry Johnson*
- Promote your mission, vision and values
- Motivate team members



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How is Polarity Thinking Implemented?

- Identify the polarity , “seeing is relieving”
- Acknowledge bias, “embrace your opposite”
- Honest dialogue, “there is wisdom in resistance”
- Informed decisions, “go slow to go fast”



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Culture of Healthy Teams

- Shared Purpose
- Dialogue
- Relationships
- Scope of Practice/Service
- Competency & Integrated Competency
- Infrastructure & Networking Councils
- Tools & Resources



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Implications



- Academia
- Research framework
- Leadership functions
- Teamwork
- Practice issues
- Collaborations
- Policy

Resources for Polarity Management

- Polarity Partnerships <http://www.polaritypartnerships.com>
- Elsevier CPM Resource Center <https://www.elsevier.com/connect/using-polarity-thinking-to-achieve-sustainable-positive-outcomes>
- Bert Parlee PhD <http://bertparlee.com/training/polarity-management/>
- Center for Creative Leadership <https://www.ccl.org/articles/leading-effectively-articles/are-you-facing-a-problem-or-a-polarity/>
- The Bonnie Wesorick Center for Healthcare Transformation <https://www.gvsu.edu/wesorick/>
- The Power of Polarities: Shoshana Boyd Gelfand at TEDxJerusalem <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Jqd4-eemoAw>
- UX Mastery The Joys of Polarity Mapping <https://uxmastery.com/the-joys-of-polarity-mapping/>
- Dr. Barry Johnson Linked In Profile (Creator of Polarity Maps and Principles) <https://www.linkedin.com/in/barry-johnson-32871056/>
- Polarity Thinking by Jay Roth <https://www.livebinders.com/play/play?id=1241861#anchor>

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