

Problem and Background

Successful intraprofessional collaboration is required to move beyond the status quo and to advance nursing knowledge generation and translation into practice (Murphy et al., 2015). Collaboration is a key element of doctoral nursing education (AACN Task Force, 2015). Knowledge and application of polarities and polarity management can increase collaboration that leads to sustainable partnerships, effectively leverages resources and increases opportunities for research and scholarship among doctoral prepared nurses.

Theoretical Basis: Paradox Theory

Paradox theory provides a lens to discuss and manage polarized ideas that are rooted in complex, diverse and somewhat ambiguous aspects of organizations (Lewis, 2000). Healthcare and academic systems are filled with paradoxes, or polarities.

Polarities:

- Are interdependent pairs of values or alternative points of view
- Appear different, competitive, or sometimes as opposites
- Are not problems to be solved
- Require managing
- Need one another over time to reach an outcome that *neither could reach alone* (Wesorick, 2016; Johnson, in press).

Polarity Management:

- Supports flexibility, resilience and dynamic decision making (Smith & Lewis, 2011).

Polarity Map: A Wisdom Organizer

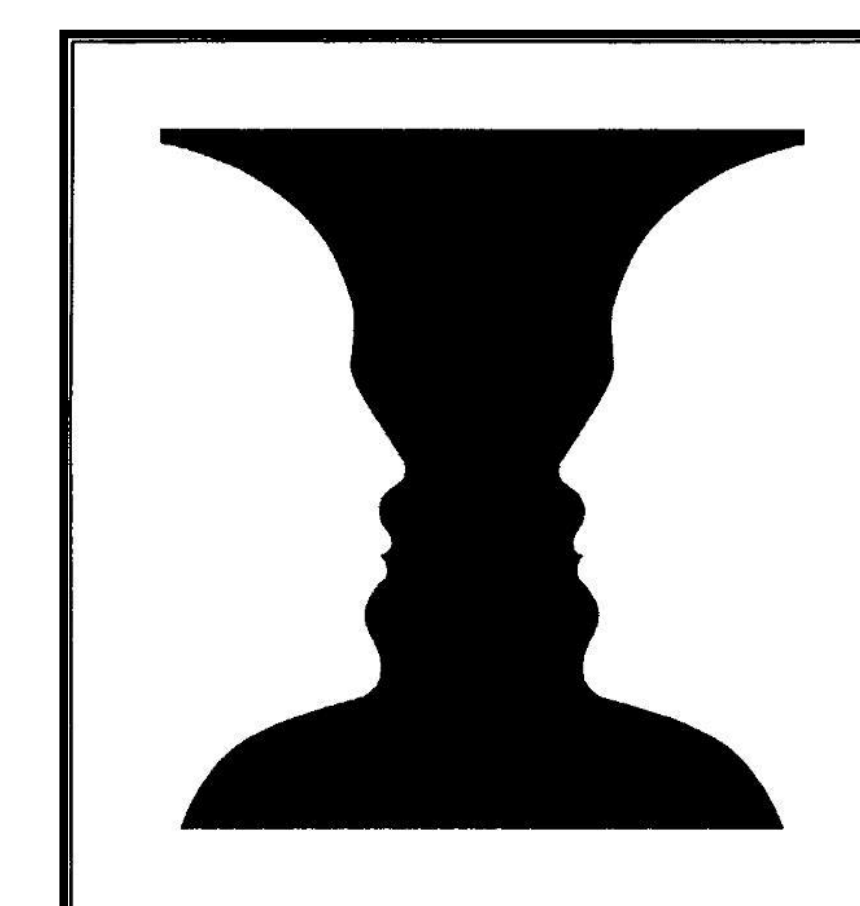
A Polarity Map:

- Is a visual representation of a polarity
- Illustrates “both AND” thinking
- Has a greater purpose and a deeper fear (loss of purpose)
- Has four quadrants with two sides (poles)
- Each side or pole has an upside and a downside
- Upsides are the positive results from focusing on one pole
- Downsides are the negative results from over focusing on one pole to the neglect of the other

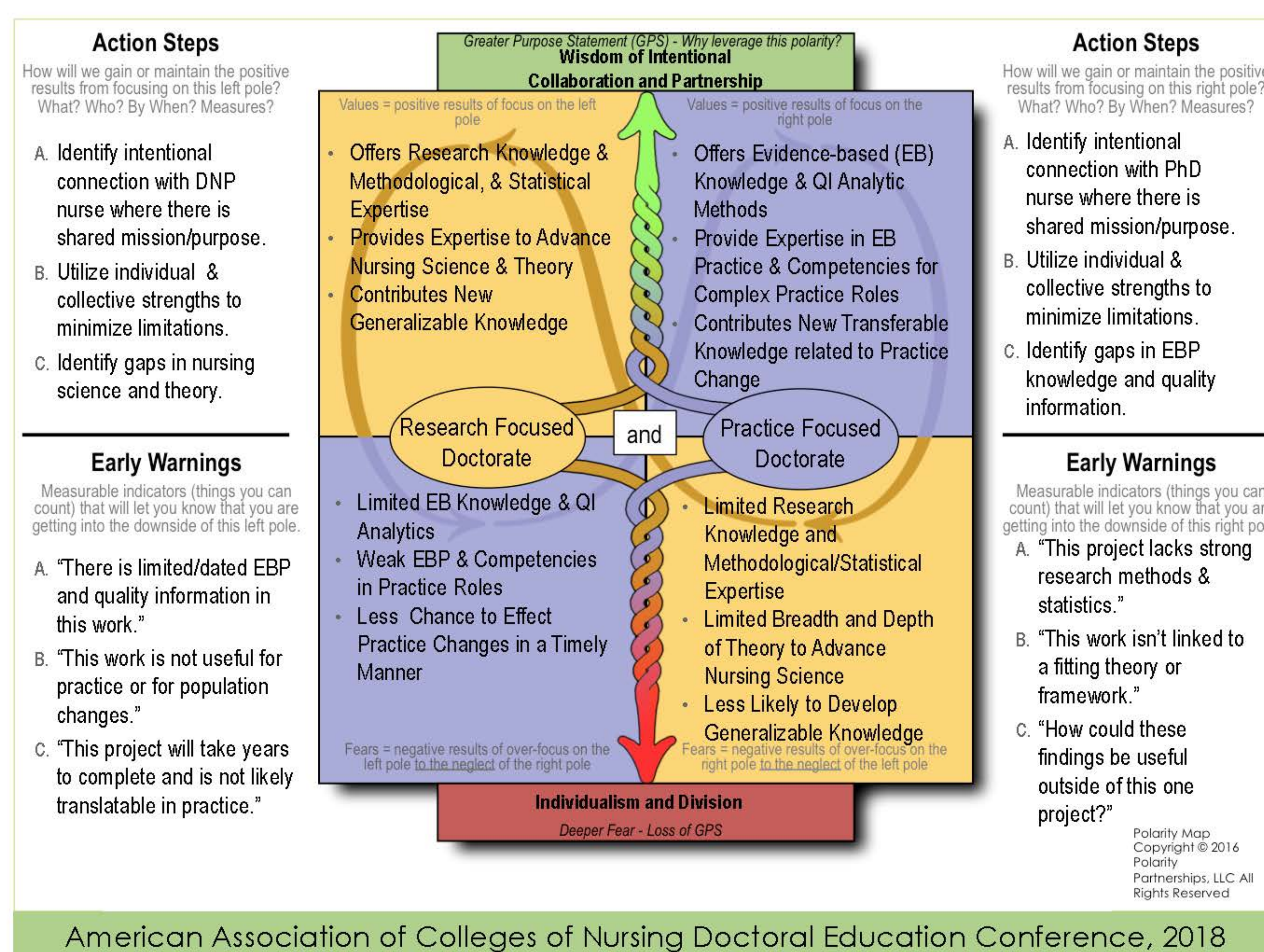
Action Steps help to maximize the positive results of each pole

Early Warning signs assist by providing an early alert or recognition that a tension is not being managed well and could lead to a loss of the greater purpose.

Polarity principles help to predict polarity outcomes. By over focusing on one side and neglecting the other side, the outcome results drift to the downside of the pole where the focus has been. To avoid wasted time, money, resources, energy and ricocheting between poles, we must leverage the dynamic tension between both poles of a polarity.



PhD AND DNP: An Interdependent Pair



Implications

The literature reflects innovative educational strategies that encourage collaboration of students in DNP and PhD programs (Eaton, Gordon, & Doorenbos, 2017; Edwards et al, 2016), while real-world examples are less evident. Systematic reviews that reflect application in practice could further validate collaboration as a greater purpose between DNP and PhD prepared nurses. A polarity lens offers guidance in facilitating collaboration in academia and practice.

Conclusions

Successful organizations find a way to simultaneously leverage the “genius of AND” (Collins & Porras, 2002), particularly during times of constant and turbulent change. Leaders become skilled at leveraging the best of both sides of a polarity to achieve the greater purpose and to avoid the limits of both sides. Nursing graduates can benefit from knowledge of polarities and polarity management to become successful in collaboration.