

# **Recognizing and Managing Polarities: Essential Leadership Skills for Sustaining Interprofessional Healthcare**

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The NEXUS Summit  
July 29, 2018

Creating Results:  
Interprofessional Vision to Action



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- MUST sign in to receive credit
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# Welcome & Introductions

# Social Media

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#interprofessional

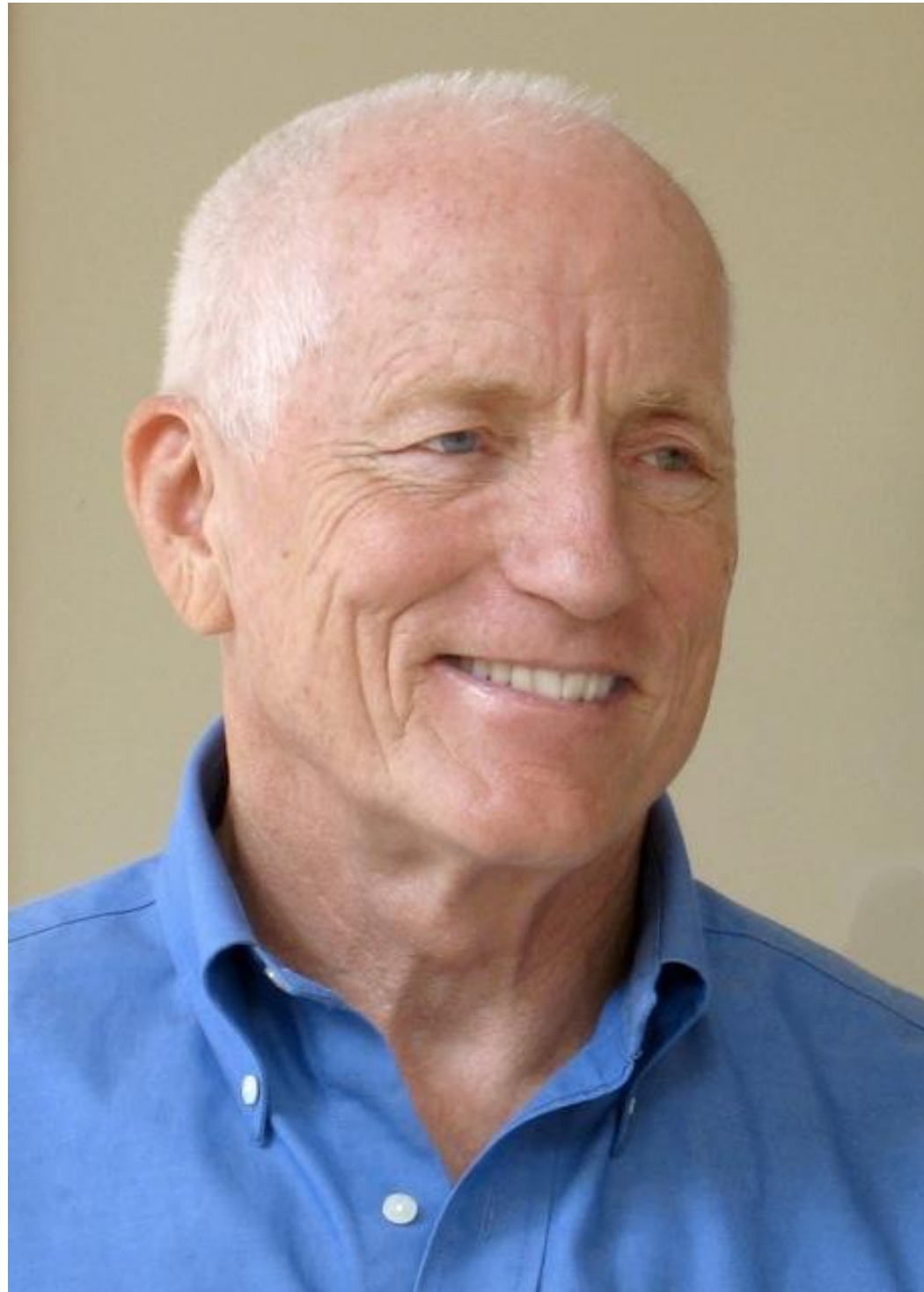
#PolarityThinking

#IPE #ICP

#DynamicBalance

# Learning Objectives

- Distinguish between problems to be solved and polarities to be managed
- Delineate the underlying polarities in interprofessional education and collaborative practice
- Experience polarity exercises associated with interprofessional education and collaborative practice



In 1975, Barry Johnson developed the Polarity Map® to leverage the power inherent in interdependent pairs and identified key principles to describe how polarity energy systems work.





In 1995, Bonnie Wesorick introduced the Polarity Map® to an international healthcare consortium which led to a published research study, a book on Polarity Thinking™ in Healthcare, and the Interprofessional Institute for Polarity Thinking™ in Healthcare.





In 2017, MissingLogic<sup>SM</sup> was established to advance Polarity Thinking in Healthcare.

**Recognizing and Managing Polarities are Essential Leadership Skills for Sustaining Interprofessional Healthcare.**

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# Problem or Polarity?





# Polarities

Also known as:

- Paradox
- Wicked Problems
- Opposite Strengths
- Chronic Tensions
- Dilemmas
- Contradictions
- Dualities
- Dichotomies

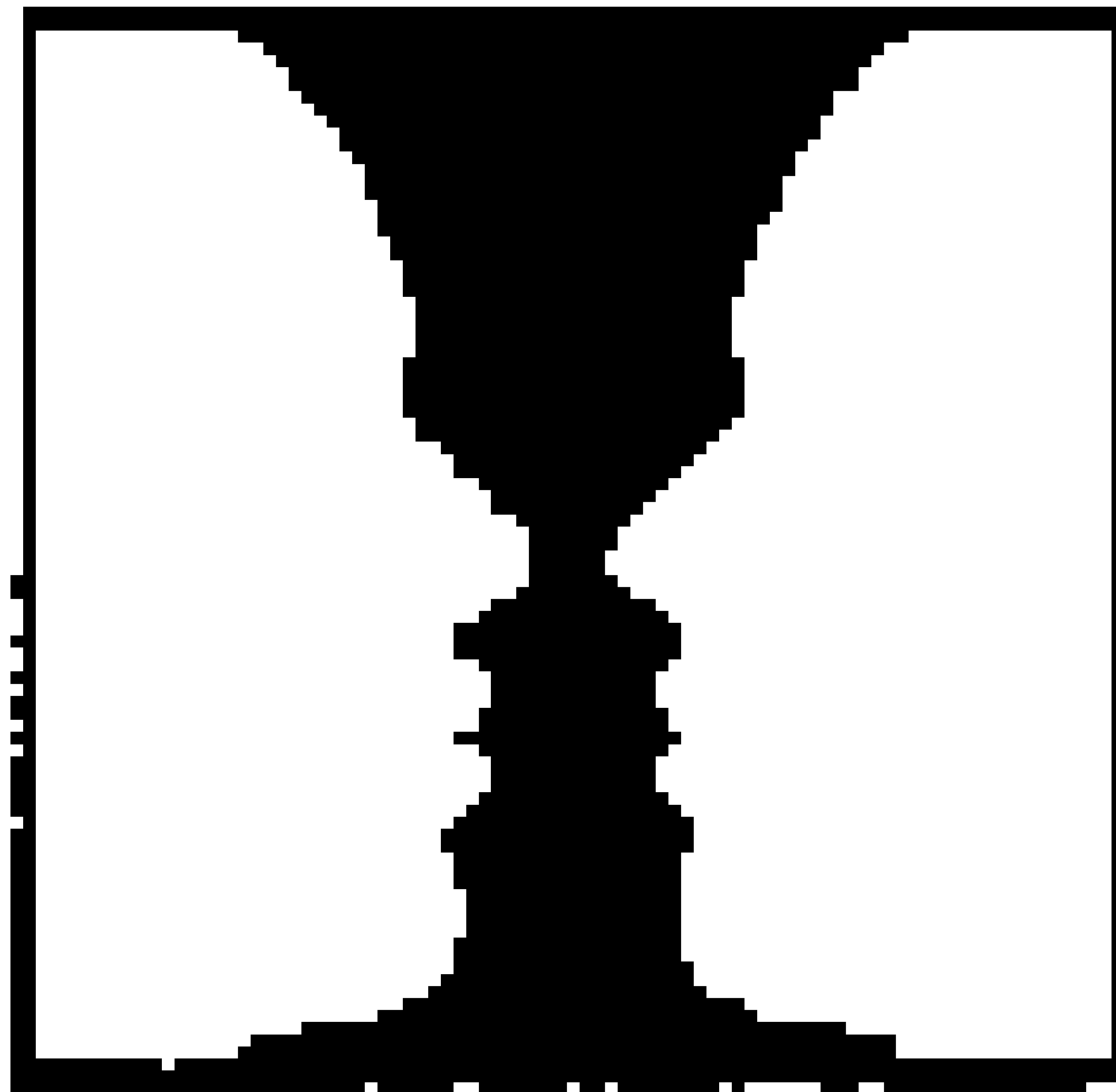
Seeing healthcare through a new lens.<sup>SM</sup>



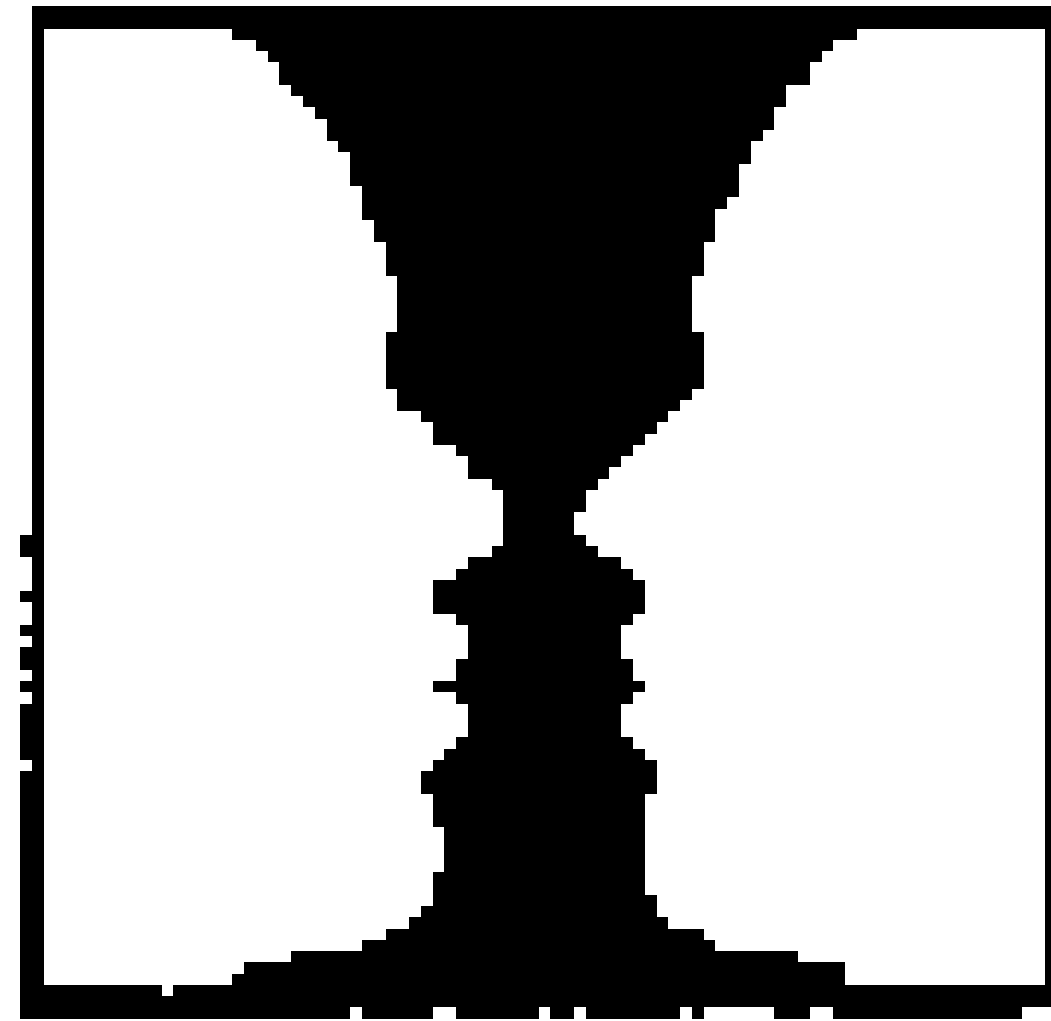
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# What is a polarity?



# What is a polarity?



Polarities are interdependent  
pairs of values or points of view.  
They need each other over time  
to gain and maintain  
performance.

Seeing healthcare through a new lens.<sup>SM</sup>



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# Why are polarities so important?



Both sides/values exist.  
One without the other means you only  
know half the picture.  
They are energetically dependent on each other.

# What do you see?





# Problem Solving & Polarity Thinking

Problem solving is about  
**“either/or”** thinking.

Polarity managing/leveraging is about  
**“both/and”** thinking.

Is the challenge ongoing? If so, there is a good chance you are dealing with a value, perspective and/or objective that has an interdependent opposite.

## **Problems to solve have:**

Independent “right” answers/solutions.  
Choose one and you’re done.

## **Polarities to manage/leverage have:**

Two or more “right” answers/solutions that are interdependent and need each other over time.

*Choose one and it’s a set-up for a hard swing, a fix that will fail, today’s solution becoming tomorrow’s problem and “I told you so’s...”*

# How All Polarities Work

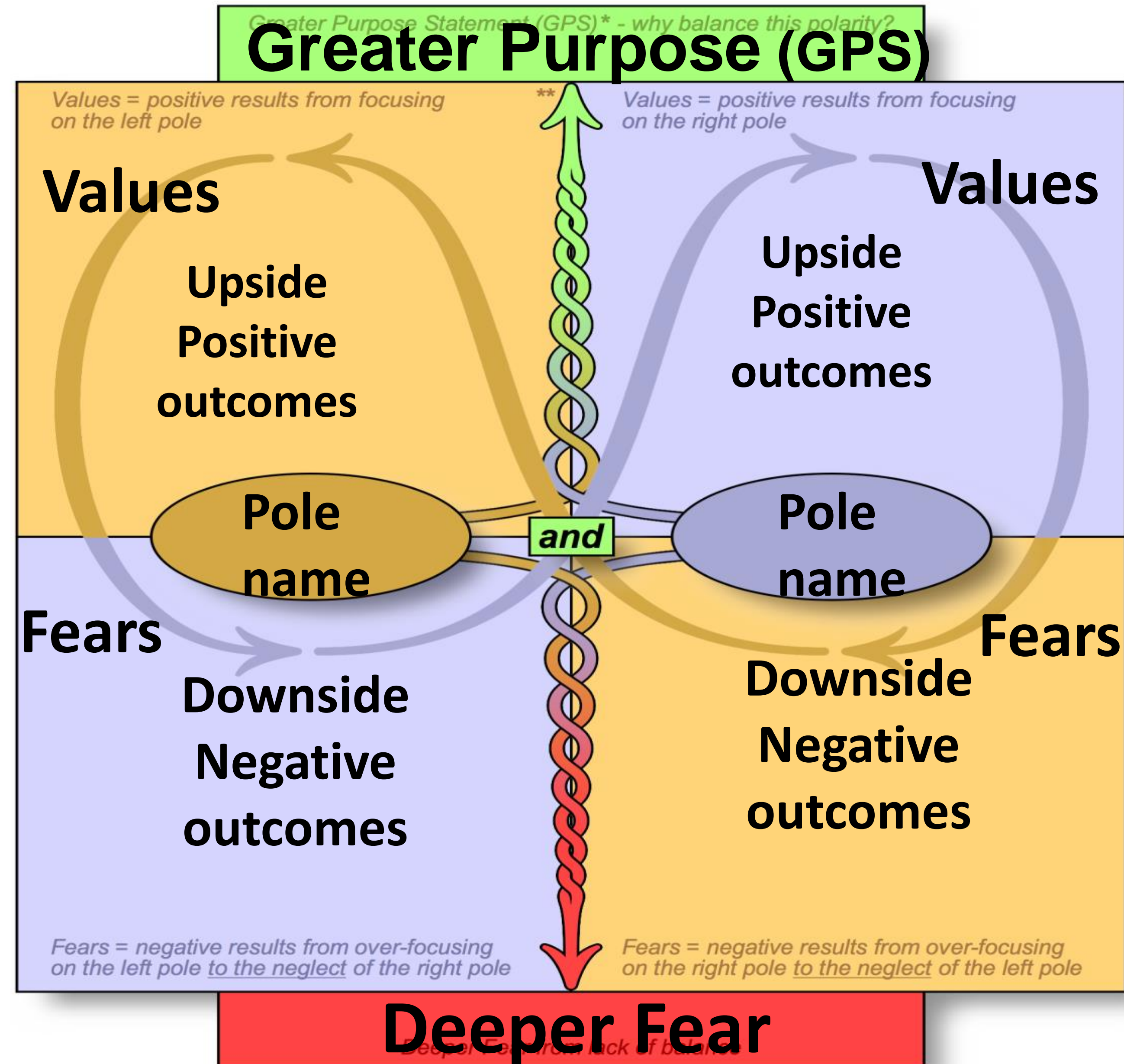
Polarities are an energy system. We often experience the energy as “negative” tension. It can actually be negative and/or positive, depending on how we understand and approach it.

- *It has a predictable flow*
- *It oscillates around both poles in the shape of an infinity loop*
- *It is unavoidable, unsolvable, indestructible, unstoppable, and leverage-able*

# BASIC POLARITY MAP®

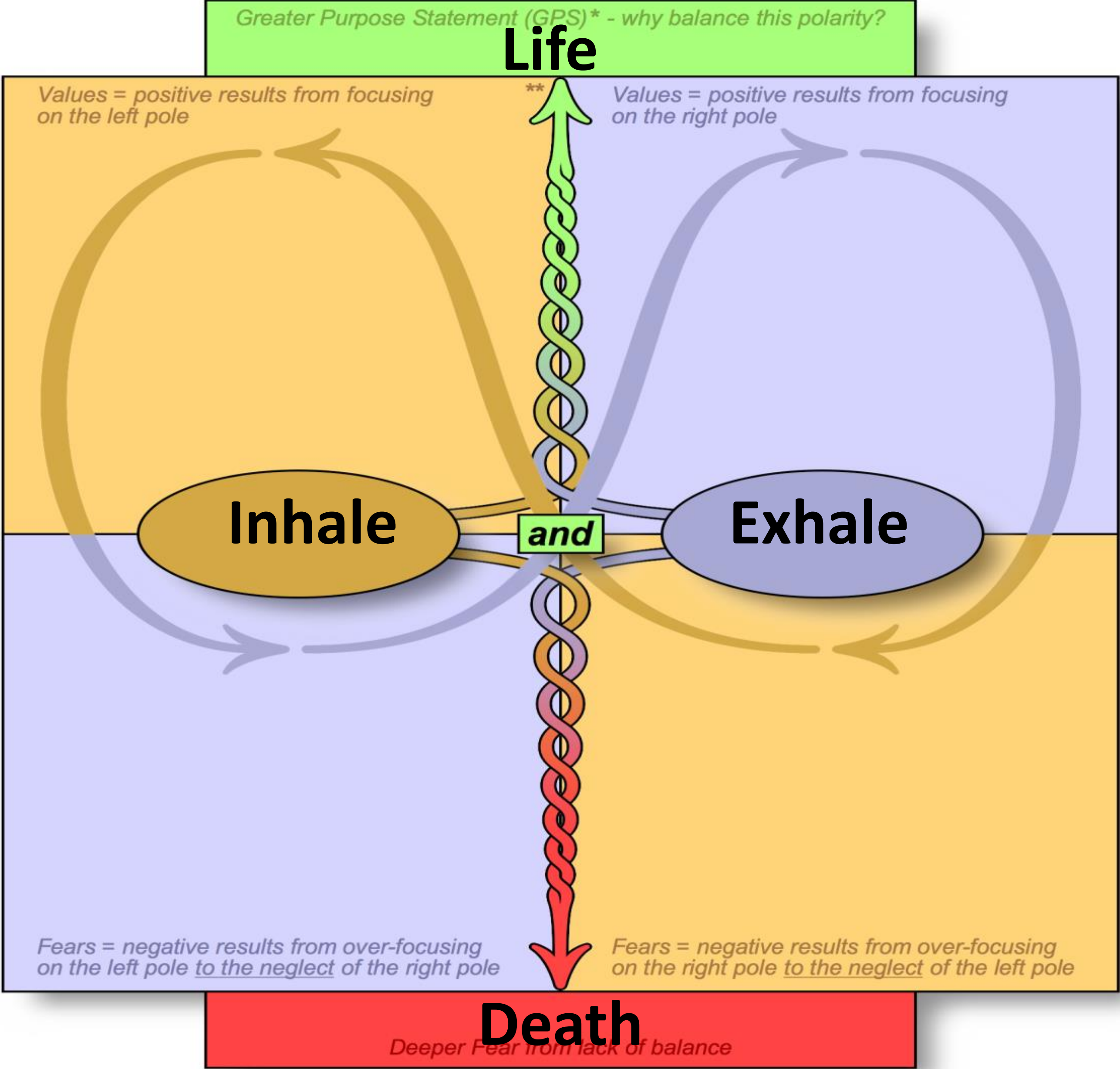
There are 11 components:

- 1-2. An interdependent pair
- 3-4. Upside Quadrants
- 5-6. Downside Quadrants
7. Greater purpose
8. An Infinity Loop
9. Virtuous cycle
10. Vicious cycle

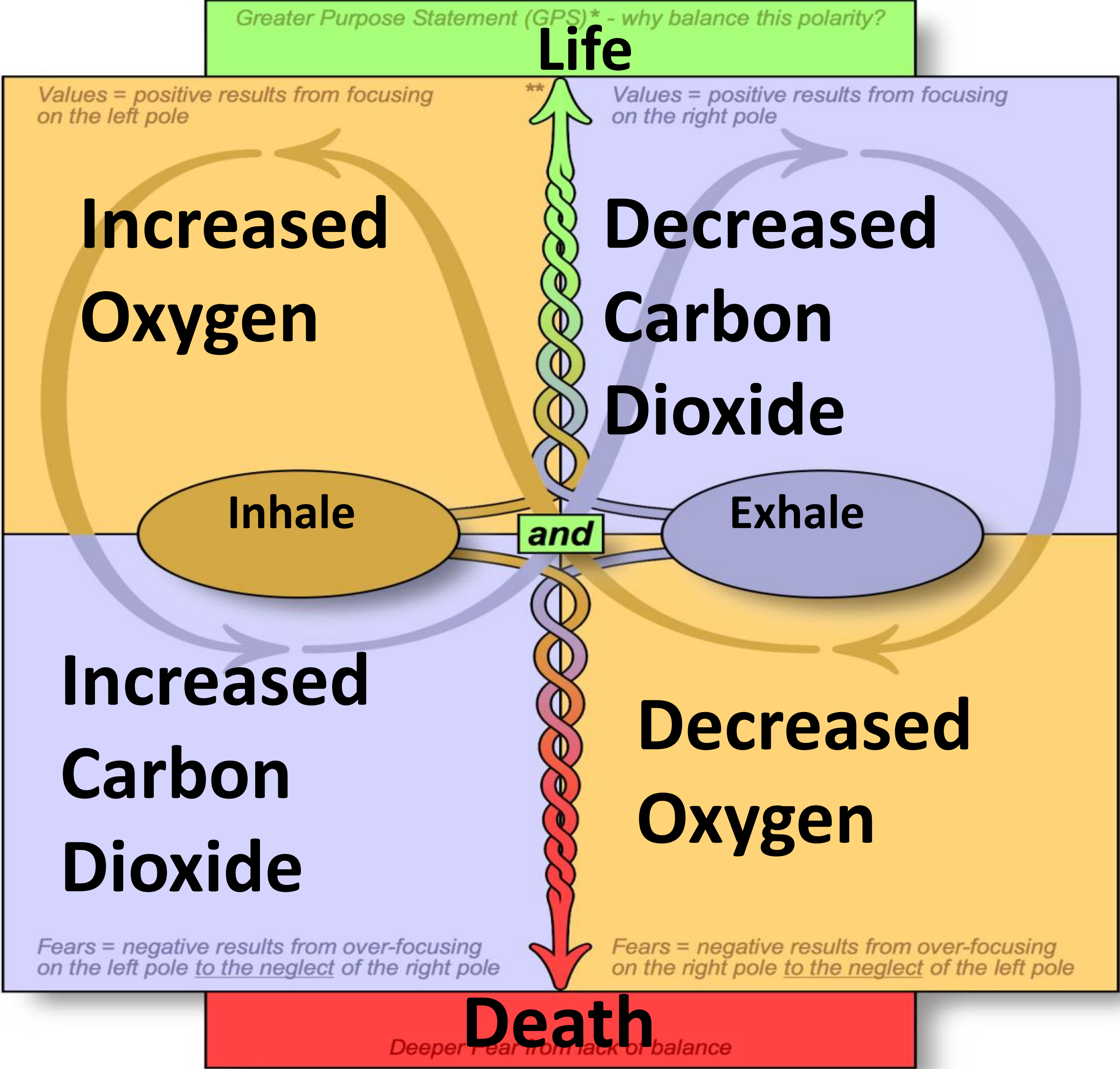




# BASIC POLARITY MAP®

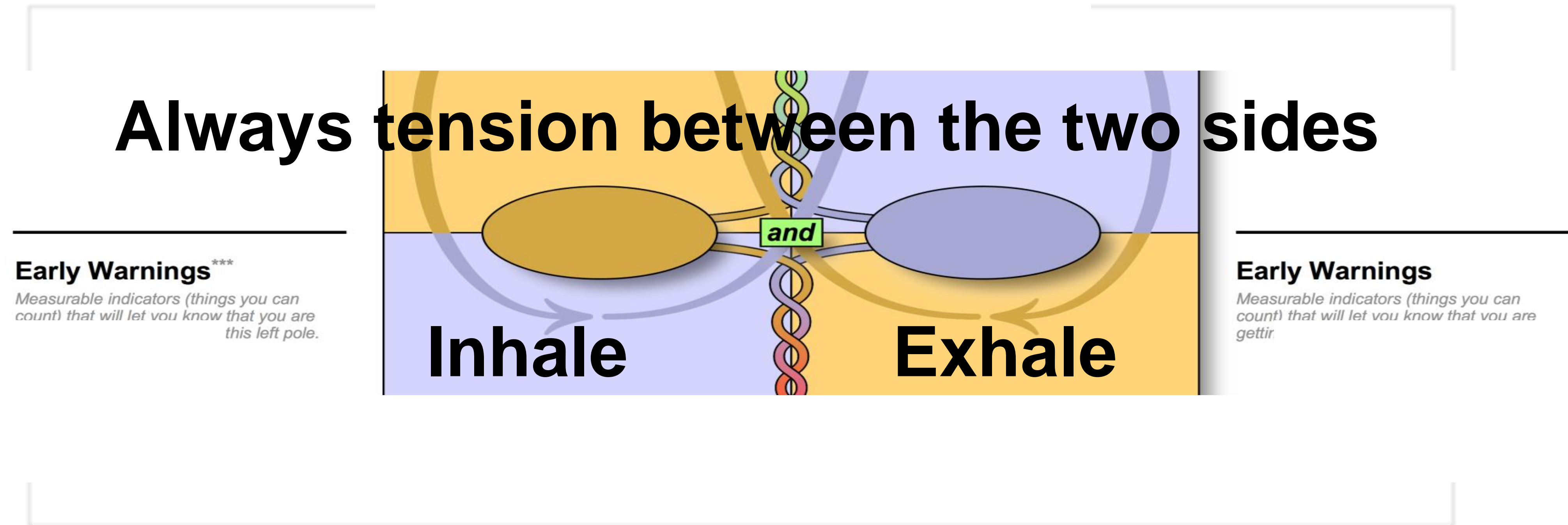


# BASIC POLARITY MAP®





# BASIC POLARITY MAP®



The Infinity loop represents the power, the tension and the movement of the tension that is always present between poles.

# Complete Polarity Map®

## Action Steps

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

This is where the metaphor ends

## Early Warnings\*\*\*

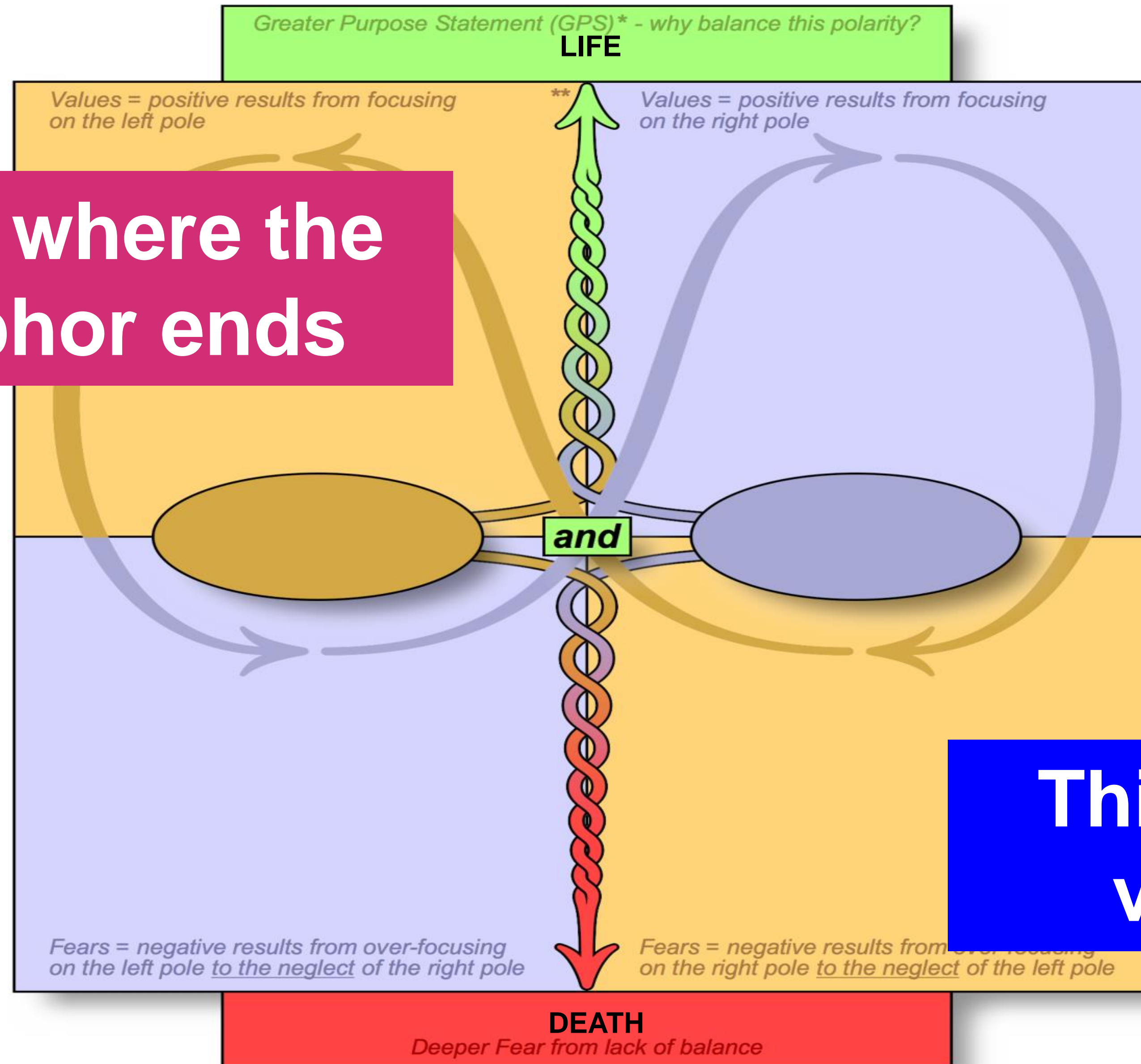
Measurable indicators (things you can count) that will let you know that you are getting into the downside of this left pole.

## Action Steps

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

## Early Warnings

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





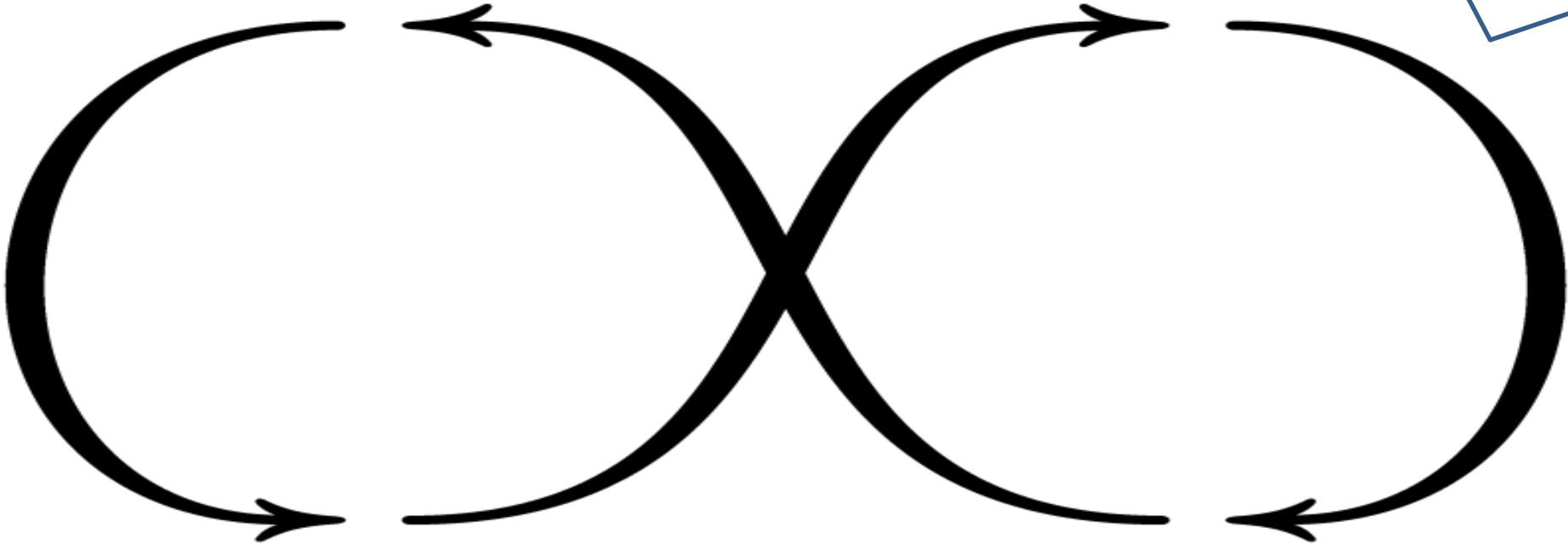
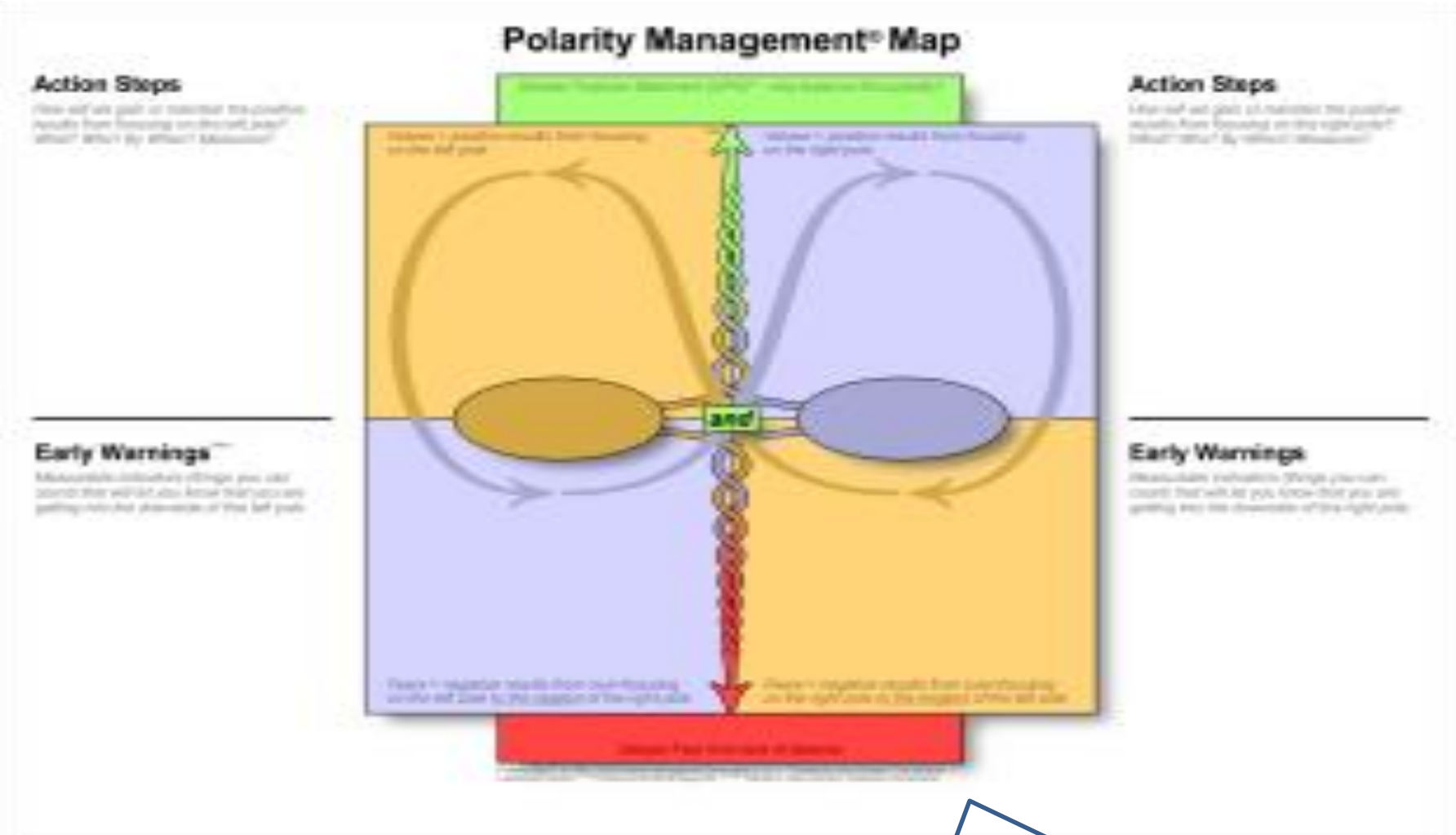
# Making the Invisible Visible!

SEE (identify) the polarity



TAP the energy in the polarity to move to “Action”

MAP the polarity

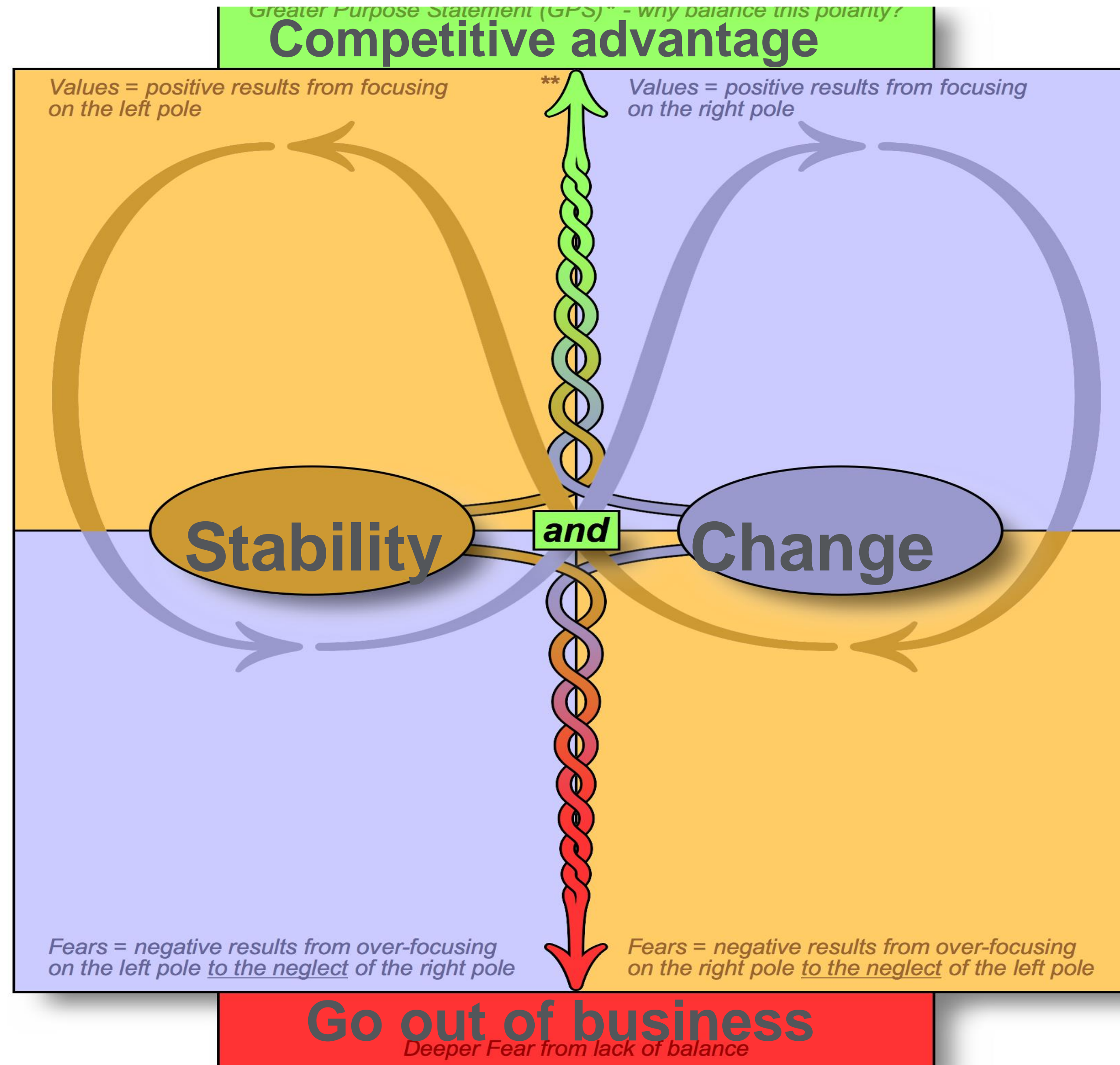


# Polarity Exercise (Get on your feet!)



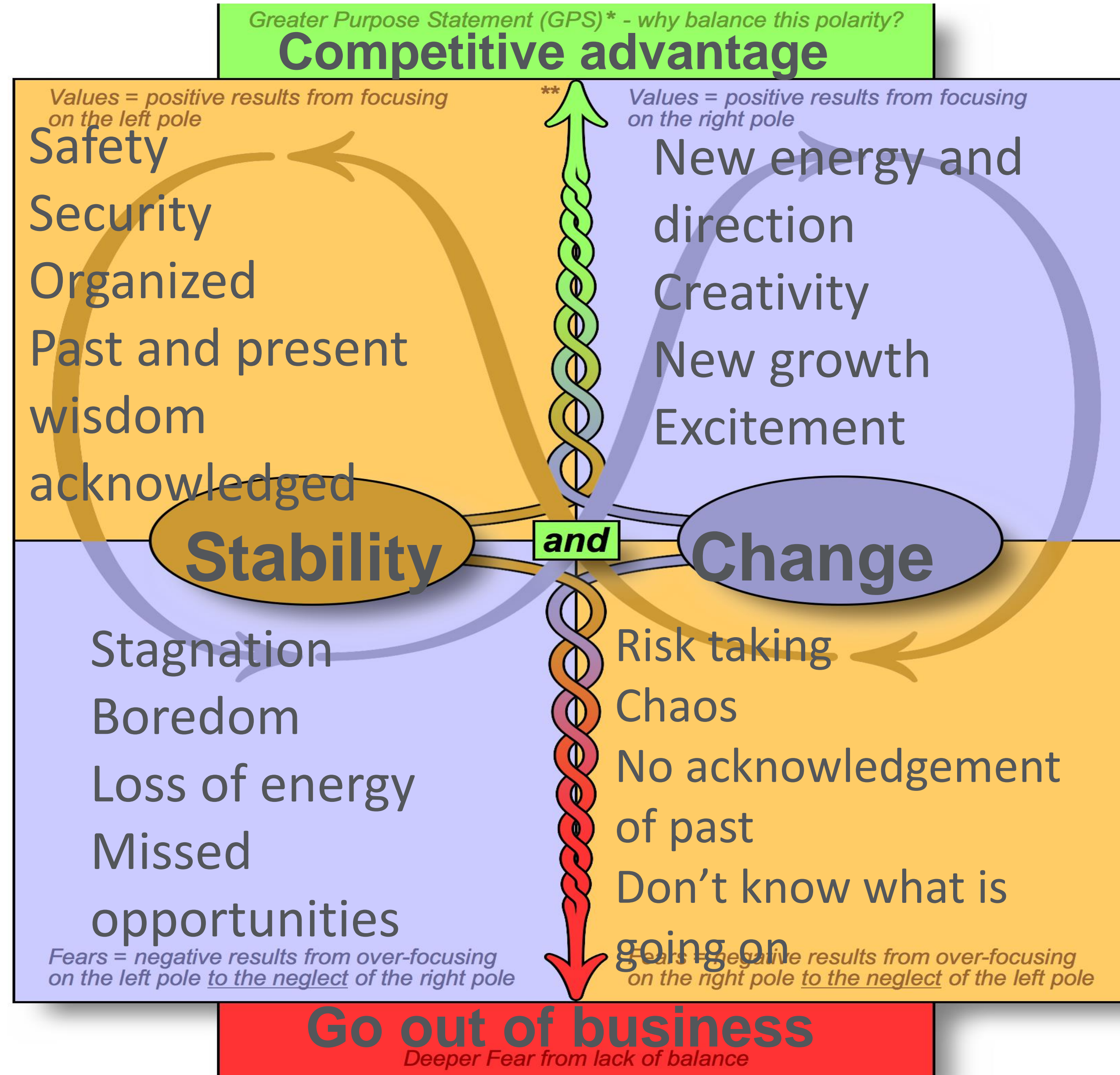


# POLARITY MAP®





# POLARITY MAP®





# POLARITY MAP®

## Action Steps

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

**Inform people of decisions.**

**Engage others in planning for the future.**

## Early Warnings\*\*\*

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

**“Every time I bring a new idea it gets shot down.”**

**“We do things our way here.”**

## Action Steps

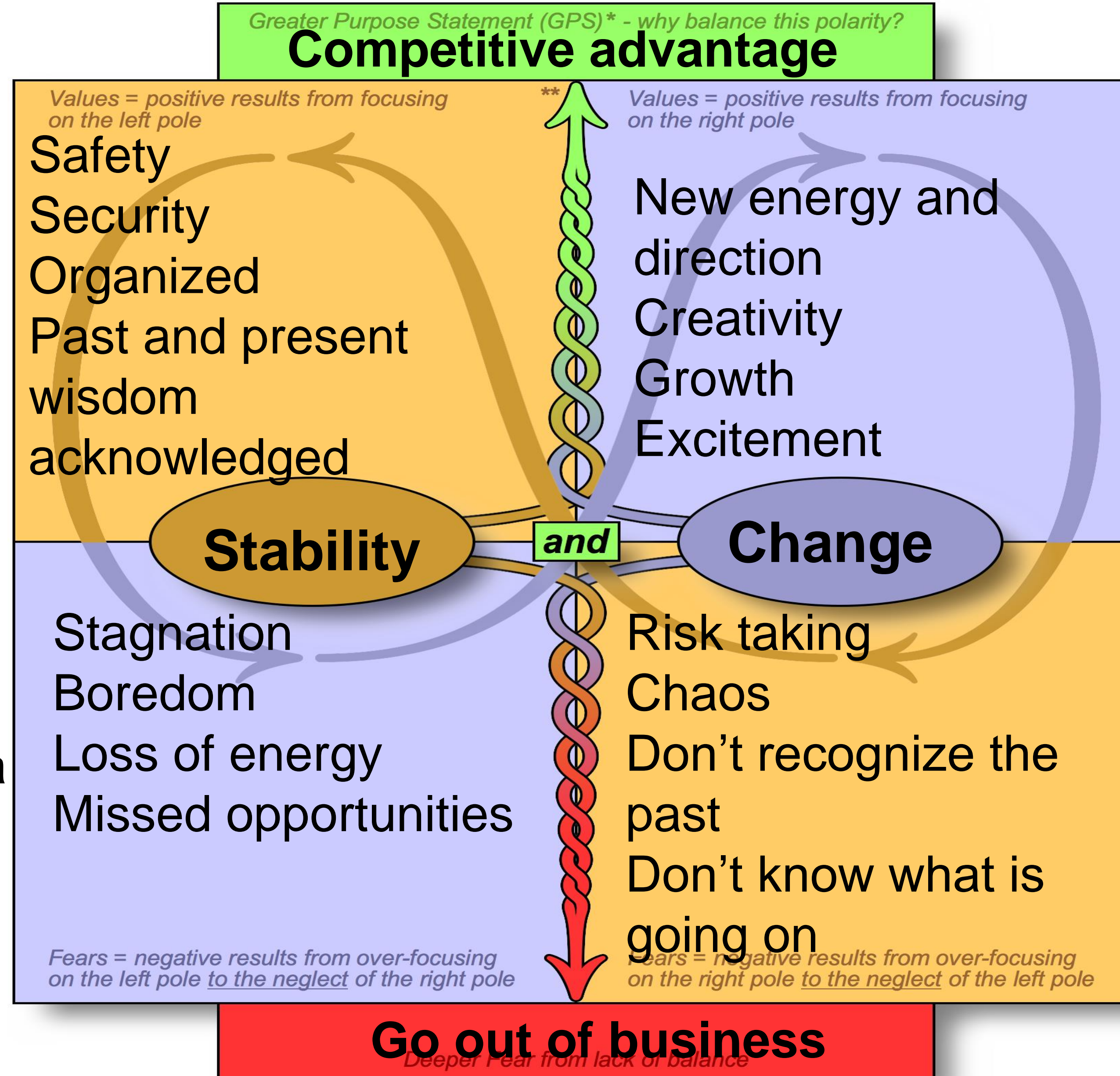
How will we gain or maintain the positive results from focusing on this right pole?  
What? Who? By When? Measures?

**Encourage and respond to new growth opportunities. Encourage and support new ideas.**

## Early Warnings

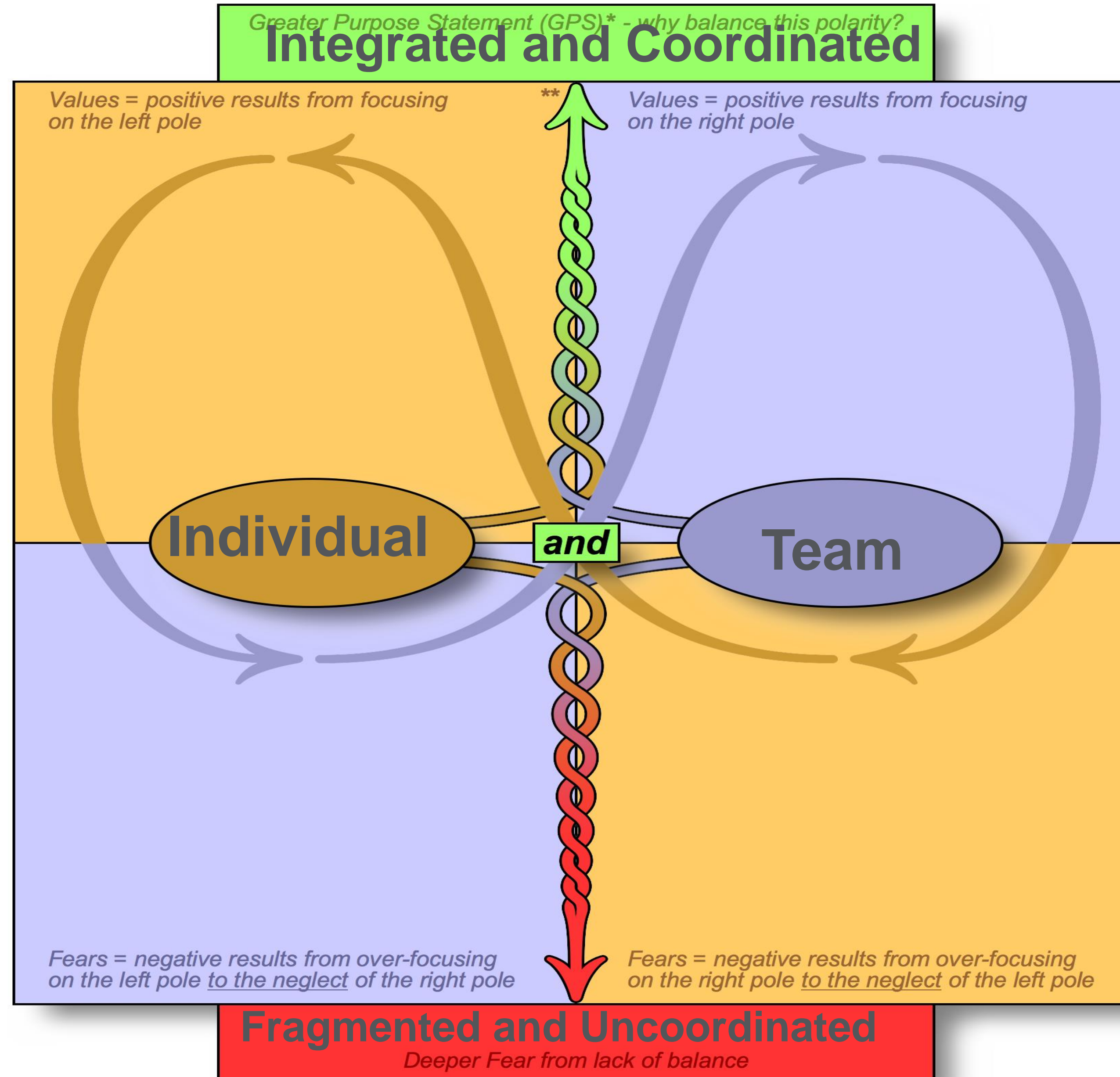
Measurable indicators (things you can count) that will let you know that you are getting into the downside of this right pole.

**“This place is crazy.”**  
**“No one knows what is going on.”**

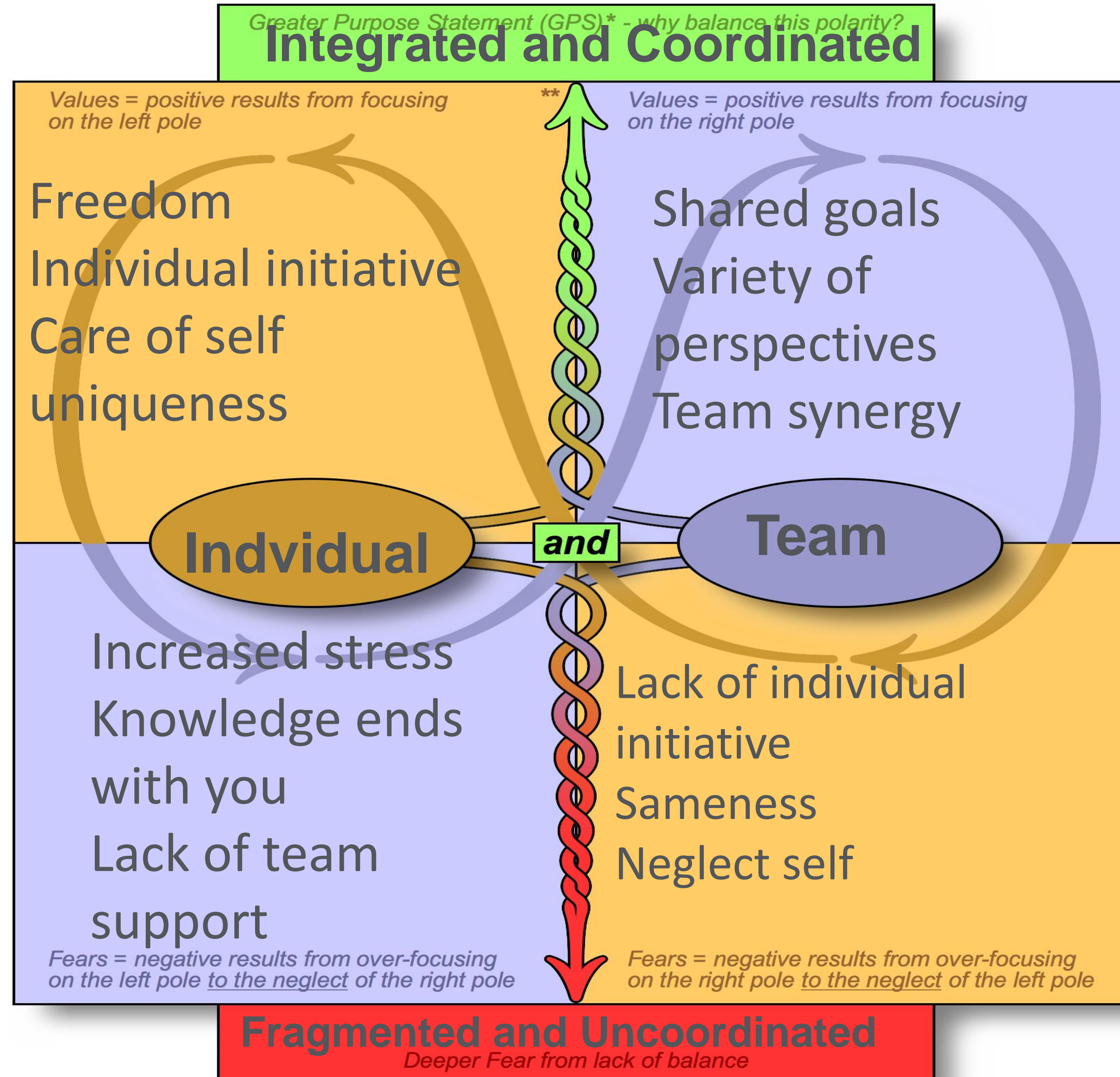




# POLARITY MAP®



# POLARITY MAP®





# POLARITY MAP®

## Action Steps

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

**Clarity in role descriptions**

**Celebrate individual team achievements**

## Early Warnings\*\*\*

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

**“The only thing they care about is getting their work done”**

**“Everybody does their own thing”**

## Action Steps

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

**Share role descriptions with team**

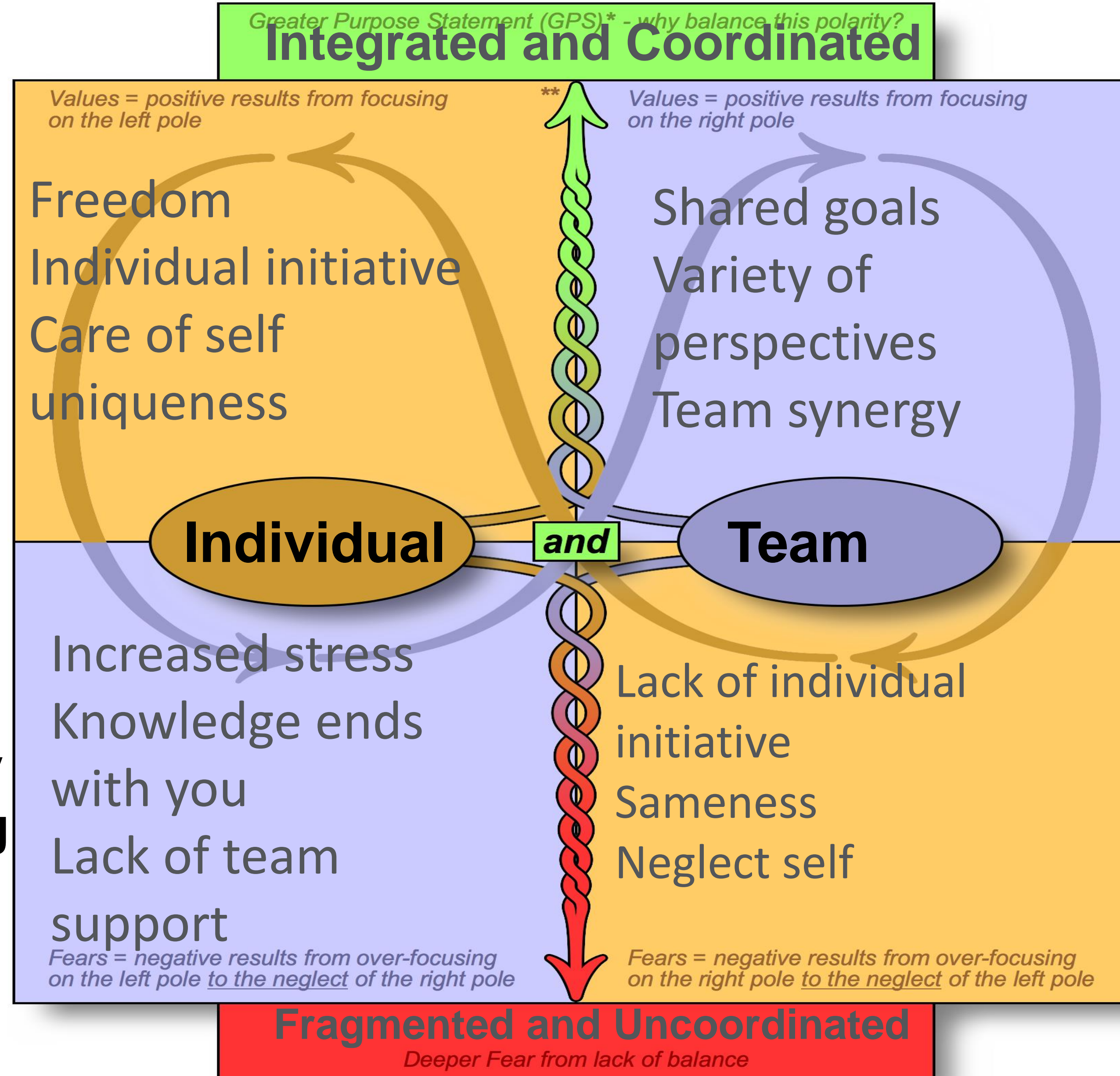
**Celebrate team accomplishments**

## Early Warnings

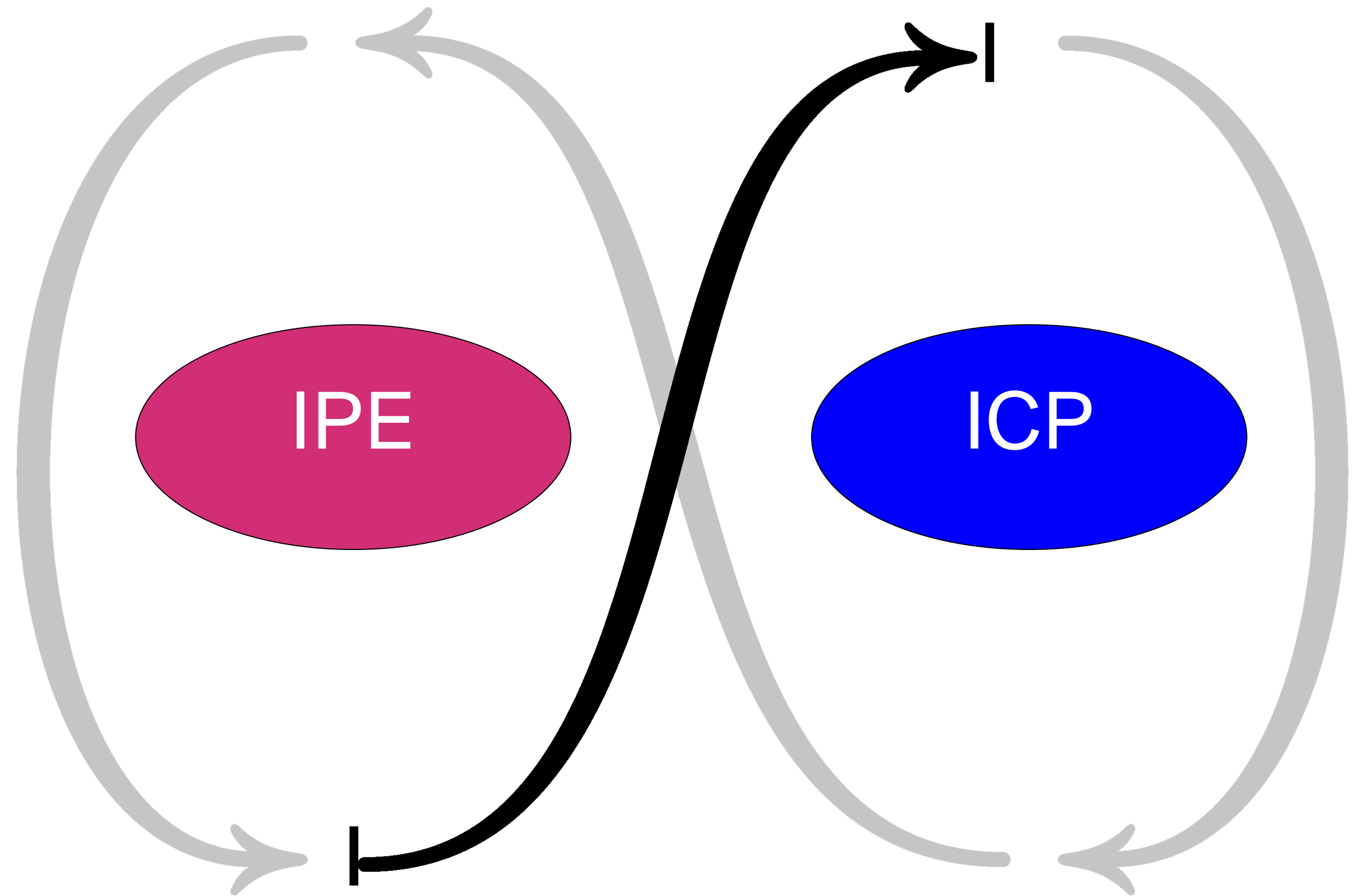
Measurable indicators (things you can count) that will let you know that you are getting into the downside of this right pole.

**Complaints that some people do not participate on the team.**

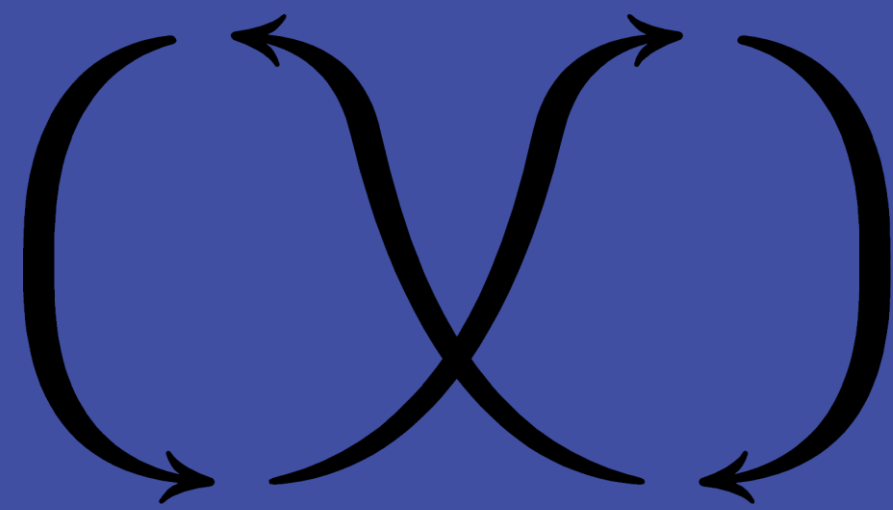
**“No one seems to own their accountability”**







# Underlying Polarities within IPE and ICP



Individual & Team Competency

Vertical (Hierarchical) & Horizontal (Partnership) Relationships

Conditional & Unconditional Respect

Candor & Diplomacy

Individual Care & Population Care

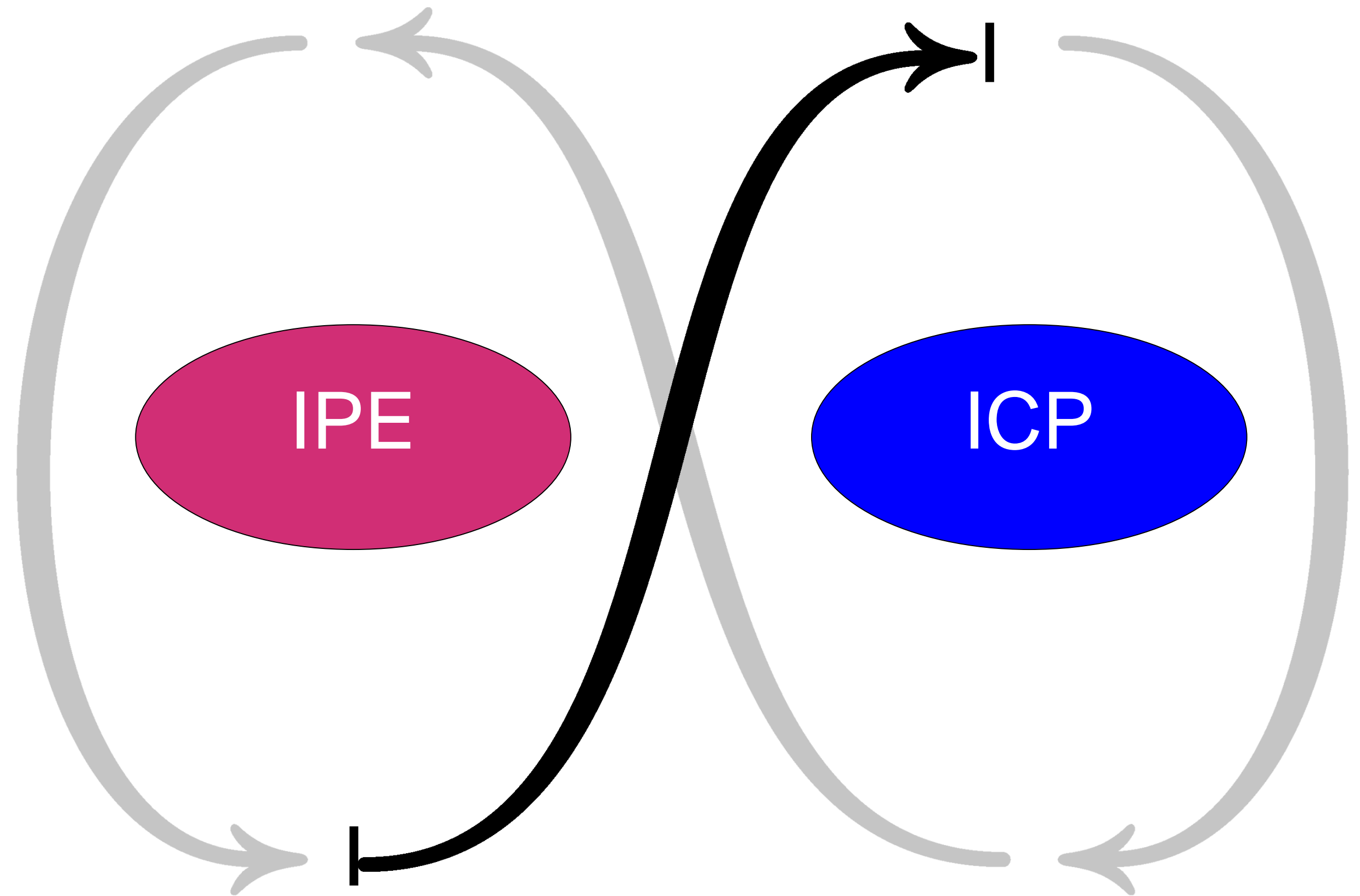
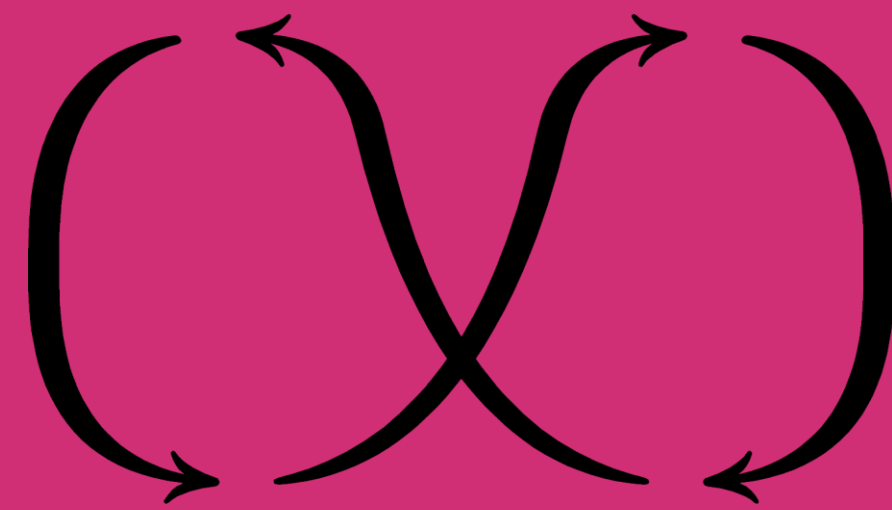
Patient Satisfaction & Clinician Satisfaction

Student Satisfaction & Faculty Satisfaction

Productivity & Relationships

# Organizational Polarity Reflection: Table Conversation







# Key Points about the IPE & ICP Polarity

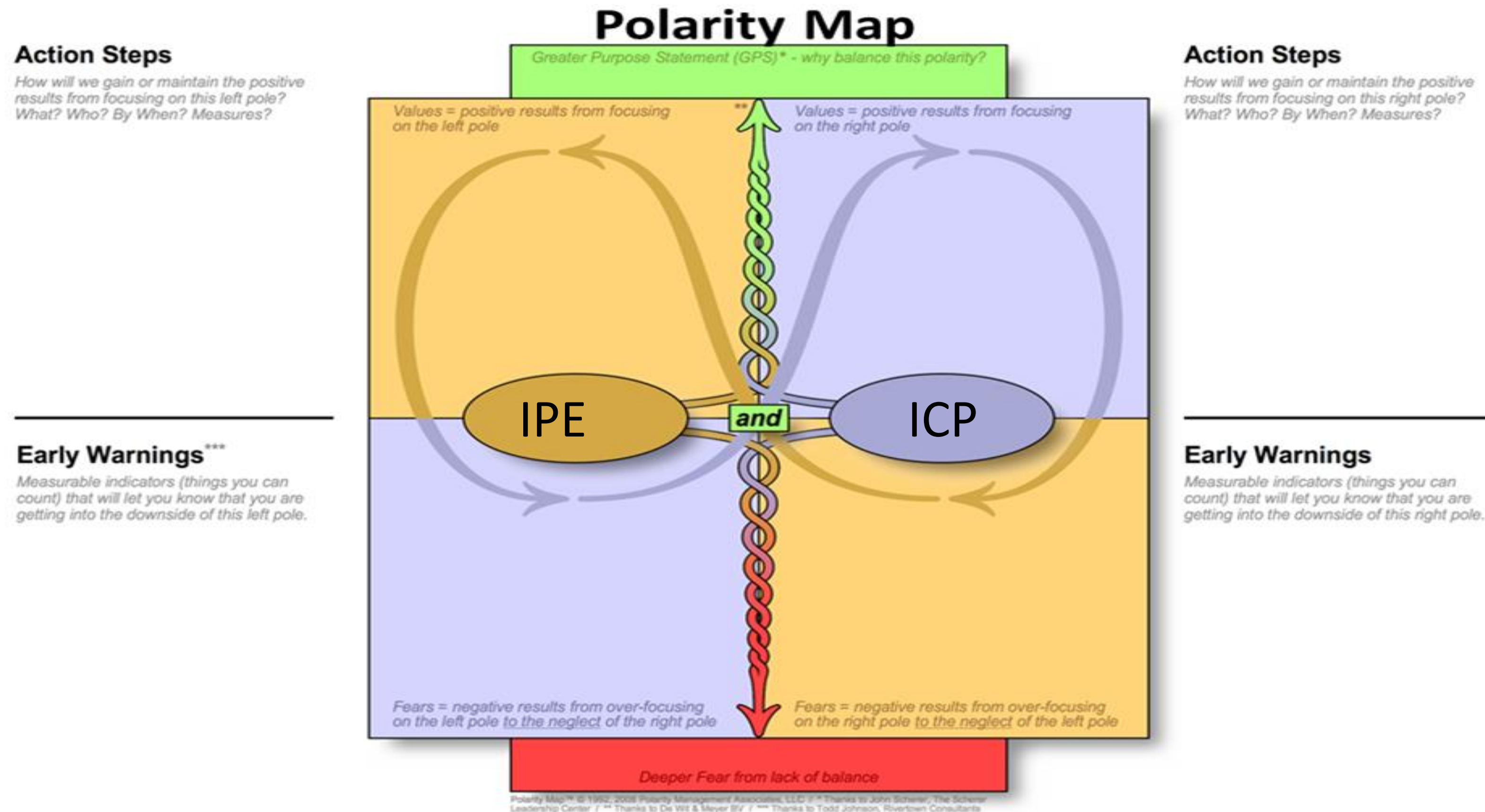
Ongoing and persistent challenge

Cannot stand alone- they need each other

Often addressed (or looked at) from one side or the other

Greater purpose (efficient, effective, integrated care) will not be sustained without both

# IPE & ICP Polarity Map

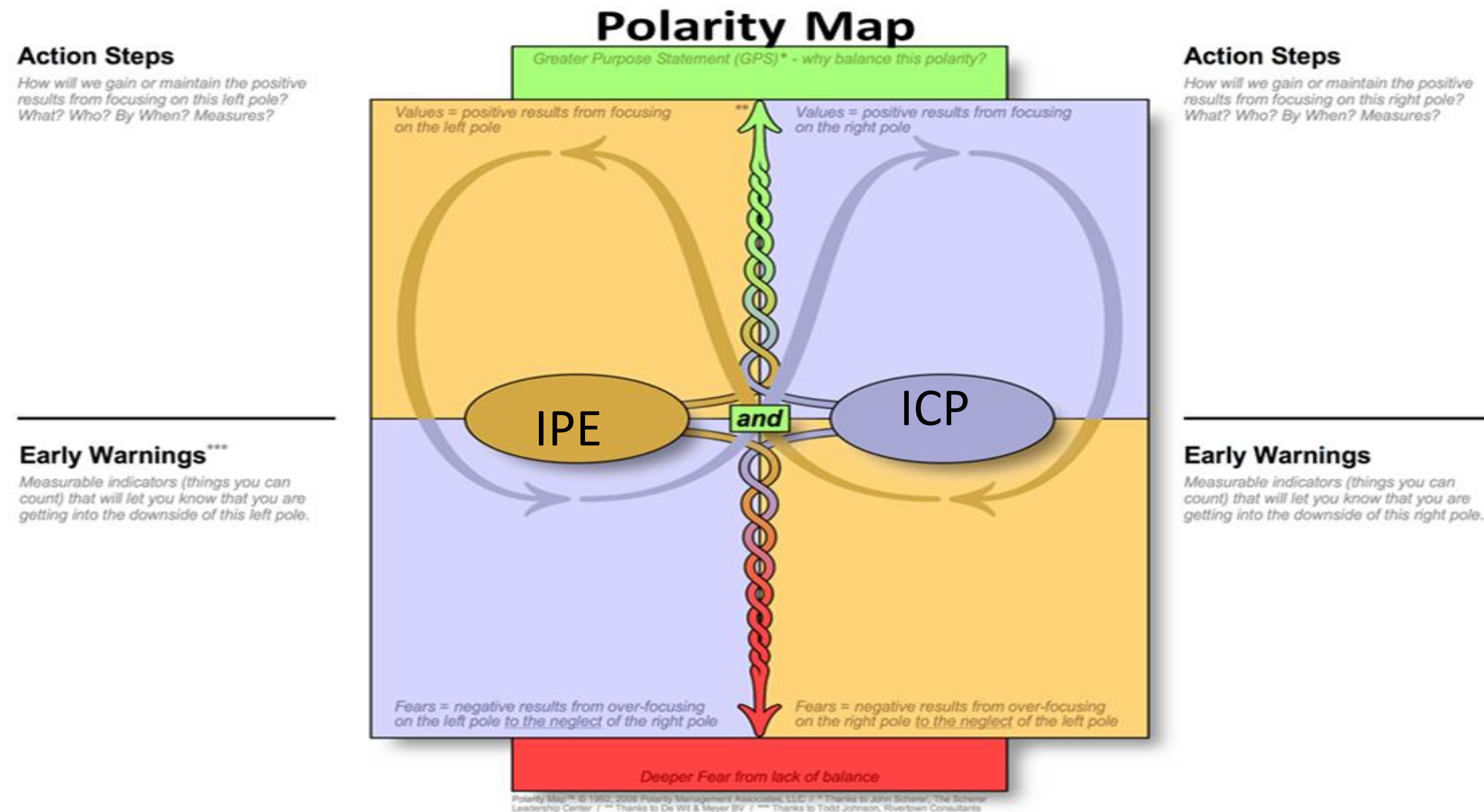


# Action Steps and Early Warnings: Table Assignments

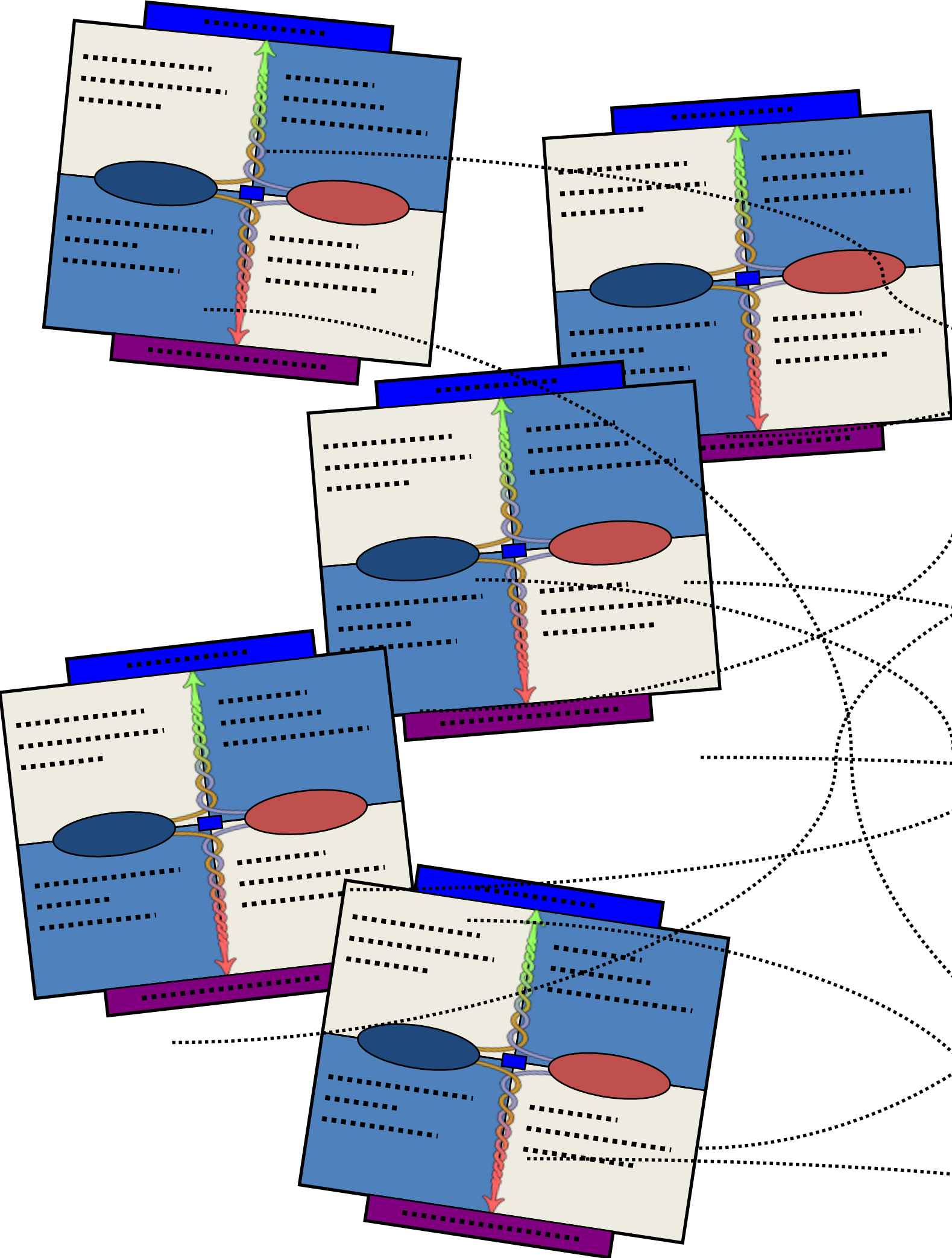




# Walking the IPE & ICP Polarity Map; Large Group Floor Exercise



# Polarity Assessments for Healthcare



## Computer Converts Quadrant Content Into Survey

1.	We are clear about what is expected
2.	We lack the ability and confidence
3.	We are encouraged to demonstrate cre
4.	We spend too much time on solving “t
5.	Capital spending is aligned with cus
6.	We lack confidence in making decisio
7.	We have the ability and confidence t
8.	We are unaware on any limits on our
57.	We do our work with a focus on custo
58.	We have customer complaints due to f

# Key points about how polarities “work”

- Both sides of the polarity are important.
- Most of us have a preference for one side or the other.
- The more strongly you are attached to one side, the harder it is to see the downside.
- Polarities are interdependent pairs that need each other **over time** in order to sustain both sides.



# Key points about how polarities “work”

- Polarity thinking helps us understand another person’s point of view.
- One sided thinking leads to accuracy without completeness. You may be accurate, but not complete in your view.
- Forcing others to come over to your point of view is likely to create feelings of resistance and resentment.
- Behaviors which accompany these feelings are often counterproductive.

# Key points about how polarities “work”

- Confirming someone else’s accuracy increases the possibility they will supplement it with yours.
- The challenge is to find the “rightness” in the other point of view.



# Thank you for Seeing *and Sustaining* Interprofessional Healthcare through a New Lens



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#interprofessional #PolarityThinking

#IPE #ICP #DynamicBalance

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