

*Barry Johnson*

# And

## **Volume One: Chapter 11**

Free peek. Please share with friends and colleagues.

*Making a Difference  
by Leveraging  
Polarity, Paradox or Dilemma  
Volume One: Foundations*

---

## Table of Contents

Chapter titles link to chapters. ToC button at bottom of all pages returns here.

---

<b>Introduction to Volumes One and Two</b> .....	1
<hr/>	
<b>Section One: The Basics – Why? What? How?</b> .....	4
Chapter 1    Why? .....	5
Chapter 2    What? .....	11
Chapter 3    How? .....	15
<hr/>	
<b>Section Two: Part <i>And</i> Whole – Each of us is unique <i>And</i> All of us are connected.</b> .....	22
Chapter 4    Family as the Whole .....	23
Chapter 5    Organization as the Whole .....	29
Chapter 6    Organization as the Part .....	43
Chapter 7    Nation as the Whole .....	47
Chapter 8    Nation as the Part .....	71
Chapter 9    Ethics and National Culture .....	77
Chapter 10    The Part <i>And</i> Whole Energy Chain .....	83
Chapter 11    The Part <i>And</i> Whole Polarity in Our Brain .....	89
<hr/>	
<b>Section Three: Continuity <i>And</i> Transformation – We change most rapidly by first embracing who we are.</b> .....	92
Chapter 12    Expansive Leader .....	93
Chapter 13    Paradoxical Change and Getting Unstuck .....	99
Chapter 14    The Recalcitrant Oncologists .....	107
Chapter 15    “Pass One–Pass All” in South Africa .....	115
Chapter 16    Mother Tongue <i>And</i> English in South Africa .....	121
Chapter 17    Continuity <i>And</i> Transformation in Our Brain .....	125

---

<b>Section Four: Justice <i>And</i> Mercy – All of us are Accountable <i>And</i> all of us are Loved, no exceptions!</b>	129
Chapter 18 Justice <i>And</i> Mercy for the Individual	131
Chapter 19 Justice <i>And</i> Mercy in Organizations	143
Chapter 20 Justice <i>And</i> Mercy Within a Nation	151
Chapter 21 Justice <i>And</i> Mercy On the Planet	157

---

<b>Section Five: Part <i>And</i> Part – From polarization to optimization</b>	171
Chapter 22 Claiming Power <i>And</i> Sharing Power	173
Chapter 23 Information Sharing <i>And</i> Information Security	183
Chapter 24 President Trump Supporters <i>And</i> President Trump Opposition ...	191
Chapter 25 The Global Nuclear Arms Race Between Us <i>And</i> Them	203

---

<b>Section Six: The Genius of <i>Or And</i> the Genius of <i>And</i> – The rejection of <i>Or</i>-thinking is an example of <i>Or</i>-thinking.</b>	208
Chapter 26 The Genius of <i>Or And</i> the Genius of <i>And</i>	209
Chapter 27 Six Ways Polarities Show Up	217
Chapter 28 Is It a Problem <i>Or</i> a Polarity?	223

---

<b>Section Seven: Stacking Polarities</b>	231
Chapter 29 <i>Or</i> With <i>And</i> Helps Us Address Poverty, Racism and Sexism...	233
Chapter 30 <i>Or</i> With <i>And</i> Helps Us Address the Climate Crisis	245
Chapter 31 Women and Other Marginalized Groups in Shared Leadership is Right <i>And</i> Smart	257
Chapter 32 Yang <i>And</i> Yin	269

---

<b>Section Eight: Doing <i>And</i> Being</b>	277
Chapter 33 Making a Difference <i>And</i> Enjoying Life	279
Chapter 34 I–It <i>And</i> I–You: The Limits of Polarity Thinking...	285

---

<b>Postscript Articles: A Polarity Lens On the COVID-19 Pandemic</b>	291
OpEd Winning On Two Fronts – Health <i>And</i> Economy	292
Editorial Individual Freedom <i>And</i> The Common Good	294

---

<b>Resources</b> .....	300
Appendix A Our Polarity Assessment™ as a Resource .....	301
Appendix B <u><i>And: Volume Two</i></u> as a Resource .....	305
Appendix C Realities of All Polarities .....	309
Annotated Bibliography .....	321
More Praise for <u><i>And</i></u> .....	325
About Barry .....	329
Blank Maps for Your Duplication and Use .....	330

---



## Introduction to Volumes One and Two

I am in Brazil being warmly welcomed by a representative of Natura outside the front entrance to their main building. They know that I have written about polarities so they smile as they translate the Portuguese words carved deep and large into the wall: “Being Well *And*<sup>1</sup> Well Being.” They explain that “Being Well” means that we must take care of Natura as a company. It must be financially sound and healthy. “Well Being” means that it is equally important to take care of those who work at Natura, the community, and the environment. (*from Chapter 6*)

### **This Book is the First of a Two-Volume Set.**

#### **Volume One – Foundations**

Volume One is a resource for people who want to make a positive difference. How? By overcoming two obstacles: resistance to change and polarization. From a problem-solving perspective, either of these challenges could be overwhelming. From a Polarity Thinking™ perspective, both can be addressed by replacing *Or* with *And* when *And* is required.

For example, the question, “Am I going to hold on to my values *Or* accept the change proposed?” is likely to create resistance to the change. That resistance could be significantly reduced by replacing *Or* with *And*. “How am I going to hold on to my values *And* gain the benefits of the change proposed?” We can save the baby *And* throw out the bathwater. (*Section Three*)

The question, “Am I going to support the group that wants to decentralize *Or* the group that wants to centralize?” is likely to create polarization. That polarization could be significantly reduced by replacing *Or* with *And*. “How do we get the benefits of decentralization *And* the benefits of centralization?” Effective decentralization requires effective centralization. (*Chapter 5*)

“Am I going to support ‘Black Lives Matter’ *Or* ‘All Lives Matter?’” This false choice is less polarizing if *Or* is replaced with *And*: “Black Lives Matter” *And* “All

---

<sup>1</sup> When the word “and” is used to connect two poles of a polarity, it will be capitalized and in italics: *And*. When the word “or” is used, incorrectly, to connect two poles of a polarity, it will also be capitalized and italic: *Or*.

Lives Matter.” It is precisely because all lives matter that disproportionate attacks on and incarceration of black people matters. (*Chapter 7*)

Regardless of the size of the system that you want to change, this book guides you through a clear process:

1. **Seeing:** Is this an issue where *And* is required?
2. **Mapping:** How can I see a more complete picture and respect alternative views?
3. **Assessing:** How are we doing with this polarity?
4. **Learning:** What can we learn from our assessment results?
5. **Leveraging:** What action steps will we take to make a positive difference?

Reading this book will help you address resistance to your efforts to make a difference. Also, it will help you address chronic conflicts that become vicious cycles as both sides become more polarized.

You will learn when and how to bring *And* into your efforts to make a positive difference. When done well, supplementing *Or*-thinking with *And*-thinking will help you convert the wisdom of those resisting change into a resource to support a more effective change. *And*-thinking will help you join polarized groups and convert a vicious cycle into a benefit for all. The results will benefit both groups and the larger system of which they are a part.

## Volume Two – Applications

Volume One is from my perspective with a lot of input and help from others. What is missing are important other voices. When considering groups with power and privilege which have dominance in the United States and those groups that have been marginalized by the dominant group, I am a member of the dominant group in every category. I am white, cis male<sup>2</sup>, financially secure, college educated, raised in a hetero-normative all-white family, from a Christian tradition, without physical or mental disabilities. Having the power and privilege that comes by being in these groups does not make me a good person or a bad person. But membership in the dominant group does come with responsibility to learn from those who are marginalized. It also includes sharing power with them and interrupting the practices and policies of the dominant group that contribute to their marginalization. This marginalization is oppressive and dehumanizing for both the dominant and the marginalized groups. Some marginalized groups include Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BI-POC), women, LGBTQI+<sup>3</sup> people, the poor, those from religious traditions other than Christian, and those with physical or mental disabilities.

Volume Two includes the voices of people from marginalized groups. Each author provides an example of how they have applied Polarity Thinking to make a difference in their life and work. The authors come from a variety of disciplines. They have worked inside organizations as founders and leaders. They have also worked

---

<sup>2</sup> Cis men are men assigned “male” at birth and feel that “man” and “male” accurately describe who they are.

<sup>3</sup> LGBTQI+ = Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans, Queer/Questioning, Intersex, plus other identities.

as external resources to organizations as coaches, trainers, organizers for justice and equity, consultants, and teachers. At least one author in each chapter has completed a Two-Year Polarity Mastery Program.

Their stories can be used and adapted to your unique situation. The variety of examples will expand your possibilities and help you avoid common pitfalls as you apply Polarity Thinking. These diverse examples demonstrate how you can succeed in making a difference by combining your life experience with Polarity Thinking and the Polarity Map®.

### **Start with the Chapter That Interests You Most.**

Though Volume One is written in a logical sequence, I encourage you to find the chapter that seems most relevant to you and read it first. Which chapter connects to where you want to make a difference?

### **All Are Loved *And* Accountable – All Are Connected *And* Each is Unique.**

This book begins and ends with two double-messages (polarities) that come to us from most religious traditions.

1. All of us are loved unconditionally, without exception, *And* we are all accountable for our actions and inactions, without exception. In our effort to make a difference, we need to hold ourselves and others accountable. At the same time, the context for our accountability is that we are loved unconditionally (*Section Four*). When our message of accountability is combined with an often unstated message of unlovability, we generate a natural resistance from the self, family member, organization, or the country receiving the message of unlovability.
2. We are all connected in a unified whole *And* we are each unique. Neither our unity nor our uniqueness can be lost (*Section Two*). We can make a difference by affirming the reality of our connectedness *And* our uniqueness. We need not struggle to make us connected *Or* to make us unique. We are already both.

Not recognizing these two polarities (*1 & 2 above*) undermines our efforts to make the positive differences we seek to make with our families, organizations, and countries. Not recognizing these and other polarities in this book has contributed to organizational dysfunction, gross inequity and the marginalization mentioned above. Recognizing and intentionally leveraging these polarities and others can make a difference in how well our organizations are run, how financially sound they are, and how effective they are at enhancing our quality of life on the planet for all of us. My hope is that *And: Volume One* and *And: Volume Two* will support you in making your difference in the world.

Barry Johnson (he, him)<sup>4</sup>

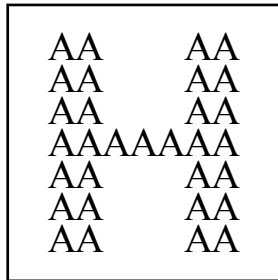
---

<sup>4</sup> In this book, I recognize diversity of identity and use she, her / they, them / he, him. For people I know well, and those identified in the public arena, like Dr. MLK, Jr., I use the pronouns they use for themselves.

Chapter 11  
The Part *And* Whole Polarity in Our Brain

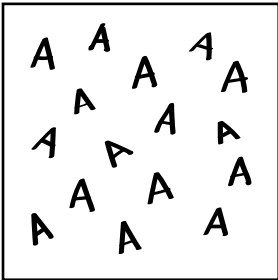
We live inside polarities and they live in us. So far we have been looking at polarities in which we live. This chapter shows how they also live in the very structure and function of our brain. In terms of the Part *And* Whole polarity, we can look at our brain as an integrated Whole which has various Parts. We can also look at it as having several interdependent pairs of Parts (polarities). For example, the left *And* right hemispheres of our brain are a polarity.<sup>R69</sup>

*Figure 1*



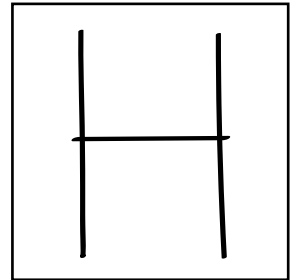
Original Picture

*Figure 2*



Left Brain Only

*Figure 3*



Right Brain Only

*Figure 1* is a picture shown to people with damage to one of the two hemispheres of their brain. The picture is then taken away and they are asked to reproduce what they saw.<sup>36</sup>

*Figure 2* is an example of what was drawn from memory by those with severe damage to their right hemisphere. This means they were reproducing the picture

<sup>36</sup> MacNielage, Peter F.; Rogers, Lesley J.; Vallortigara, Giorgio. *Origins of the Left and Right Brain*. Scientific American, July 2009.

using only their left brain as a memory source. What was remembered were the discrete Parts. There is some truth to the reproduction in that what they saw did contain many “A’s.” But it is not complete. What is missing is the pattern of the Whole: the shape of the “H.”

Figure 3 is an example of what was drawn from memory by those with severe left hemisphere damage. They were reproducing the picture using only their right brain. What was remembered was the “H” pattern or Whole. There is also some truth to this reproduction in that what they saw did contain an “H.” But it is not complete. What is missing are the “A’s” or the Parts that made up the Whole.

It is the interdependency between the two hemispheres that allow those of us without brain damage to reproduce the full picture. It would be silly and inaccurate to tell those who produced Figure 2 that they were wrong in showing a bunch of “A’s,” or to tell those who produced Figure 3 that they were wrong in showing their “H.” In each case you would generate unnecessary resistance. Each group can be confirmed that they reproduced a part of the picture *And* that there was more. Rather than contradict their memory of the picture, we can supplement it with what is missing. This is what we are doing with polarities all the time. Those who have one point of view within a polarity have half of the truth. They need the other half for a more complete picture of reality just as we need both hemispheres of our brain for a more complete picture.

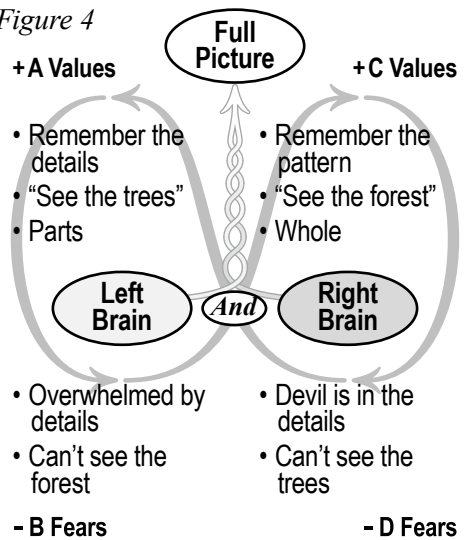
Figure 4 is another version of the Part *And* Whole polarity reflecting the contribution of each hemisphere to each pole.

“You can’t see the forest for the trees.” (-B) “The devil is in the details.” (-D). Each of these familiar quotes reflect our vulnerability of using one hemisphere to the relative neglect of the other.

It is important to be able to see and address the Details in our life. We need to “See the Trees.” Our Left Brain helps us pay attention to the Parts (+A). At the same time, we need to see and address the patterns in our life. We need to “See the Forest.” Our Right Brain helps us pay attention to the Whole (+C).

Polarity Thinking tends to focus on the pattern that is the infinity loop and how it functions over time within a Polarity Map® as an integrated Whole. *Or*-thinking tends to focus on the details and choices we need to make in the moment between the differentiated Parts. It is necessary to be clear about each part of the polarity map.

Figure 4



### “The Whole is More Than the Sum of Its Parts.”

This is a fundamental point in the origins of Gestalt Psychology which started off as a perceptual theory. Language is a great example. The word “tree” is more than the combination of 4 letters: e, t, r, e. They are arranged in a pattern that represents, in English, a big plant. Each letter (Part) is important *And* the pattern (Whole) is important. We are engaged in leveraging the Part *And* Whole polarity any time we read any language. This is true also of the sounds (Parts) that make a word (Whole) in spoken language. Words become (Parts) a collection of words that make up a complete sentence (Whole). This, of course, scales up to a paragraph, chapter, book, and library. This parallels the scaling up from Individual *And* Team to Nation *And* United Nations. This Part *And* Whole thing seems to be going on everywhere!

In his article, “Managing with the Brain in Mind,”<sup>37</sup> David Rock identifies a number of brain realities that are consistent with our understanding of polarities. For example, he indicates that we are more effective when our brain has a reward response than when it has a threat response. Within a polarity map, the reward response could be the GPS and the threat response could be the Deeper Fear. Effectively dealing with **Status, Certainty, Autonomy, Relationships, and Fairness (SCARF)** contributes to a reward response which supports our overall effectiveness. Each of these identified dimensions can be seen as contained within poles of a polarity rather than treating them as independent variables. Status and Autonomy parallels a focus on the Part while Relationships and Fairness both parallel a focus on the Whole. Certainty parallels Stability/Continuity while an improvement in Status parallels Change/Transformation. This will be explored in *Section Three*. For a more thorough look at the interface between polarity realities and brain research, see Ann Deaton’s chapter in *And: Volume Two – Applications*.

### Summary

It is no accident that we see Part *And* Whole polarities when we look at our families, teams, organizations, and nations. We are living inside them. It is also true that our brains are designed to help us see both. Thus, the polarities we see outside are also happening inside. Left *And* Right hemispheres, paralleling Part *And* Whole, are only one of the generic polarities dynamically operating within our brain. The Part *And* Whole polarity also corresponds to dimensions of life to which our brain has a reward response that contributes to effectiveness, or a threat response that contributes to ineffectiveness. Leveraging polarities is consistent with effective Nero-Leadership.

### New Realities in Chapter 11

Reality 69 The Left *And* Right hemispheres of our brain are a polarity.

---

<sup>37</sup> Rock, David. *Managing with the Brain in Mind*. Strategy and Business issue 56, Autumn 2009.

# Praise for And



“Polarity Thinking has revolutionized how we approach tough problems in our work. There are countless moments – from making a big decision as a management team, to launching an issue campaign that requires navigating fraught political waters, to building deep and lasting coalitions, to building more inclusive and collaborative teams – in which we map out a polarity to push our thinking and hone our strategy. In today’s complex world of politics and advocacy, identifying ways to better leverage key polarities has exponentially increased our impact. We are vocal evangelists and have shared the tool with countless customers and partners who have adopted it to increase the efficacy of their own progressive advocacy work!”

~ **Lanae Erickson**  
*Senior Vice President for Social Policy & Politics :: Third Way*



“The fight for equity, inclusion, social justice and humanity is not an ‘or’ argument. It is a ‘must’ argument which can only be achieved when advocates and allies augment *either/Or*-thinking with *both/And*-thinking. These two volumes are uniquely divided between Foundations skill building in Polarity Thinking, and a wide variety of Applications of *both/And*-thinking. The two volumes contain critical information to help us all break the divisiveness that can result from only using *either/Or*-thinking.”

~ **Eddie Moore, Jr., PhD**  
*Founder/Program Director, The White Privilege Conference*



“Polarity Thinking is one of the essential disciplines underlying our vital and never-ending search for win-win solutions to our many challenges and dilemmas. Barry Johnson has given us an invaluable gift in creating – and now deepening – this powerful tool. It can help us arrive at *And* solutions in a world that often seems hopelessly tangled in a bipolar dance within polarities. Along with systems thinking, Polarity Thinking is an essential skill that should be part of the education of every human being on the planet, especially anyone charged with leadership responsibilities.”

~ **Raj Sisodia**  
*FW Olin Distinguished Professor of Global Business, Babson College  
Co-founder & Co-Chairman, Conscious Capitalism Inc*

HRD PRESS

22 Amherst Road  
Amherst, MA 01002  
(800) 822-2801  
www.HRDPress.com

POLARITY  
PARTNERSHIPS

Sacramento, CA  
(916) 793-5400  
www.PolarityPartnerships.com

**Click to buy one or both volumes**