

# Winning On Two Fronts – Health *And* Economy

Polarity Thinking can save lives, strengthen the economy, and speed the national recovery.

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**I**N THE BATTLE WITH COVID-19, we all feel a tension between our concerns for Public Health *And* our concerns for the Economy. We can't afford to have this battle on two fronts become a battle between two fronts. If it does, we all lose. Our leaders must leverage this tension to work for us. If they do, we all win.

Though the situation is very complicated, a fairly simple shift in thinking will help us save lives *And* accelerate our economic rebuild. The two battle fronts (Health, Economy) must be connected with *And* rather than *Or*. Health *And* Economy are an interdependent pair called a polarity. All polarities have two poles connected by *And* because they need each other. We need a Healthy Public to build a Strong Economy *And* we need a Strong Economy to care for a Healthy Public. *And*-thinking is required to leverage this polarity.

When dealing with polarities, *Or*-thinking makes things worse. It creates a false choice between Health *Or* Economy. If we focus on Health to the neglect of the Economy we make the recession worse. If we focus on the Economy to the neglect of Public Health we make the pandemic worse.

Paradoxically, a focus on Health alone will eventually undermine our health. And a focus on the Economy alone will eventually undermine our economy.

Polarities are unavoidable and indestructible. This means we have been living with the Health *And* Economy polarity, nationally and globally, long before COVID-19. And we will be living with it beyond the foreseeable future. As we enter a recovery phase, it would be easy for us to put all of our energy into rebuilding our economy. This is not a good idea. We must continue to give quality attention to public health both for the sake of public health and for the sake of the economy.

The process for leaders to optimize polarities for the benefit of everyone includes:

1. Recognizing Health *And* Economy as a polarity – embrace *And*-thinking.
2. Understanding the basics of how polarities work and how to leverage them.
3. Creating a dual strategy that supports both Health *And* Economy.

One half of the dual strategy must reflect the expertise of the economists. The other half must reflect the expertise of healthcare professionals. Both halves must reflect the political judgement of the politicians. Creating the dual strategy together allows for each group to be informed by the other as it's being built.

This collaborative process is faster and delivers more sustainable results than if all sides

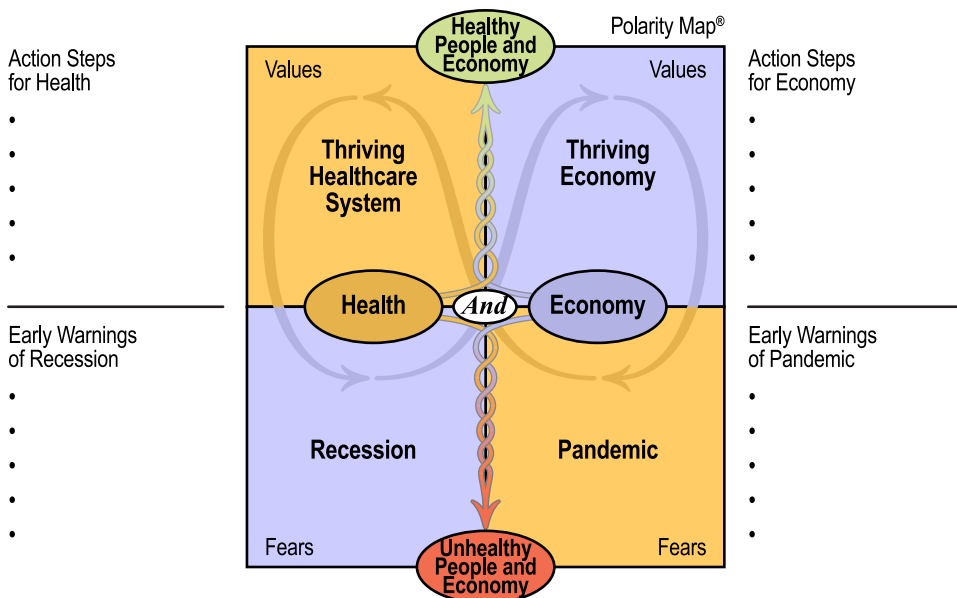
create strategies separately and then try to combine them. It also provides a basis for political leaders to generate bipartisan legislation and financial support to implement the dual strategy. The wisdom in the room can be guided by and summarized on a one-page Polarity Map® like the one below.

Misdiagnosing Health *And* Economy as an either/*Or* problem will result in an unnecessary additional loss of life, a deeper economic recession, and a slower national recovery. Recognizing it as a polarity and applying *And*-thinking will help us save

lives, rebuild the economy, and accelerate a national recovery. We must win on both fronts – Health *And* Economy. A polarity lens will help.

There are other key polarities at play within this pandemic struggle. An expanded article on Individual Freedom *And* The Common Good is available on the Polarity Partnerships Resource Portal at [www.polarityresources.com/now](http://www.polarityresources.com/now).

A pair of new books on Polarity Thinking will be available this Spring.



The Polarity Map is a wisdom organizer. It can help everyone understand and optimize polarities well. At its core are two interdependent poles: Health *And* Economy. If stakeholders leverage this polarity well, both sides will enjoy the benefits of the Greater Purpose at the top: Healthy People and Economy. If they don't, the entire system will descend into the Deeper Fear at the bottom: Unhealthy People and Economy. Polarity Map® is a registered trademark of Barry Johnson and Polarity Partnerships, LLC. Commercial use encouraged with permission. Visit [PolarityPartnerships.com](http://PolarityPartnerships.com) for more.

**BARRY JOHNSON** is the author of *And: Making a Difference by Leveraging Polarity, Paradox or Dilemma. Volume One - Foundations*. HRD Press, 2020  
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