



# Discover Your Blind Spots *and How to Address Them*

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POOL

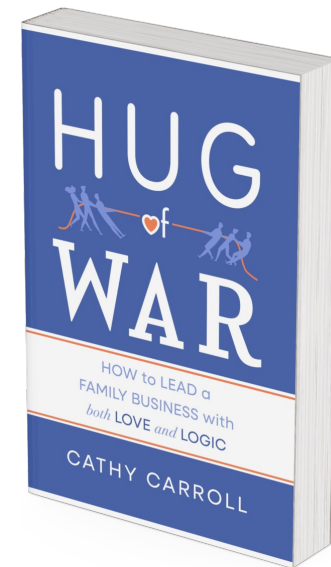
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# Goals for Today

- Help you identify leadership blind spots
- Introduce you to polarity thinking
- Build your confidence in using polarities:
  - To develop new skills to improve effectiveness
  - To transcend conflict





Aspiration: To Live

BENEFITS

Get oxygen

Eliminate CO<sub>2</sub>

BENEFITS

Inhale

Exhale

OVERUSES

Too much CO<sub>2</sub>  
(hypercarbia)

Not enough oxygen

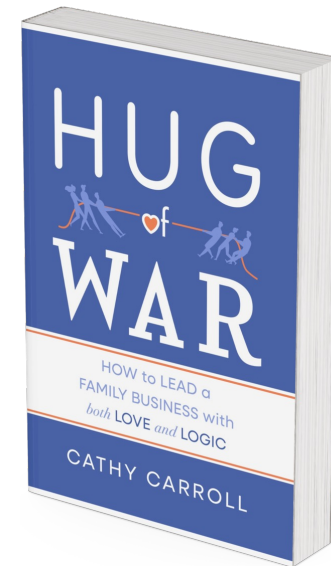
OVERUSES

Aversion: To die



# Polarity Principles 1 & 2

1. Polarities can't be solved; they must be managed.
2. Both poles are necessary over time to sustain high performance; neither is sufficient alone.



**Aspiration: Business Success**

BENEFITS

- We honor our history and heritage.
- We leverage historic brand value.

- We stay current with advancements in technology, culture, and strategy.
- Our innovations keep the brand current/fresh/relevant.

BENEFITS

**Tradition**

**Innovation**

OVERUSES

- Our product, service, and/or culture has become obsolete or commoditized.
- Our company's brand image is tired, and competitors gain market share.

- We overinvest in new concepts and lose touch with our history and heritage.
- We erode our brand equity with too much change and innovation.

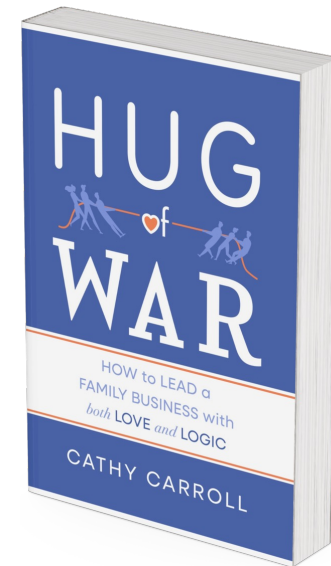
OVERUSES

**Aversion: Business Failure**



## Polarity Principles 3 & 4

3. An overfocus on one pole will guarantee its overuses.
4. We all have pole preferences. They are born from an aversion to the overuses of the opposite pole.





**Aspiration:** Thriving family and business

BENEFITS

- Our investment in infrastructure and brand relevance keeps us thriving.
- We leverage “patient” capital by investing in long-term bets with high ROIs.
- We don’t raise entitled heirs.

BENEFITS

- We use profits to diversify away from a single asset or industry.
- We issue dividends to enhance owners’ lifestyles.
- Non-operating owners feel value from and connected to the family business.

Invest

Harvest

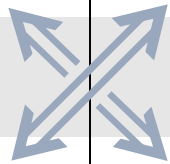
OVERUSES

- We are overexposed to a single asset or industry due to lack of diversification.
- Profit reinvestments inhibit the ability to enhance family member lifestyles.
- Non-operating owners feel disconnected and/or resentful of the business due to low dividends.

OVERUSES

- We have outdated infrastructure and/or lack marketplace relevance due to underinvestment.
- We diversify investment into assets with poor returns.
- We limit the incentive to work due to excess dividends.

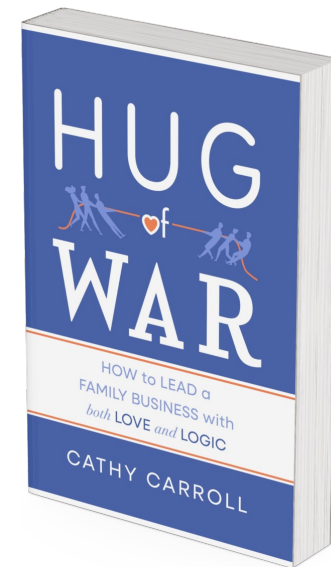
**Aversion:** Ailing family and/or business





## Polarity Principles 5 & 6

5. Arguing the diagonals puts force against force because both poles are “right”
6. To leverage the tension well, supplement either / or thinking with BOTH / AND thinking





Build relationships  
Challenge others  
Collaborative  
Competitive  
Creativity  
Delegation  
Disruption  
Empathy  
Follow rules  
Get sh\*t done  
Humility

Move fast  
Patience  
Positivity  
Pragmatic  
Question rules  
Stability  
Strategic thinking  
Supportive  
Thorough  
Urgency  
Visionary

Name a *Leadership Strength* you are proud of

What do you like most  
about this strength?

## Your Strength Here

What feedback do you  
hear when you overdo it?

What do you need  
more of?

What is at risk of happening  
if you do more of what you  
need more of?

# Identity X-RAY

- How I want to be seen
- What I want to be known for

- Missing qualities that inhibit my effectiveness
- Untapped skills

- How others might view me
- \*\*\*Blind spots!\*\*\*

- Things I don't want to be associated with or known for
- Things I dislike in other people

**Aspiration:** To help family business leaders flourish

BENEFITS

- People will like me.

- I will stand for something I believe in and help family leaders flourish.

BENEFITS

Humble

Bold

OVERUSES

- People will find me boring because I have little to say.

- People won't like me because I'm constantly blathering on about polarities.

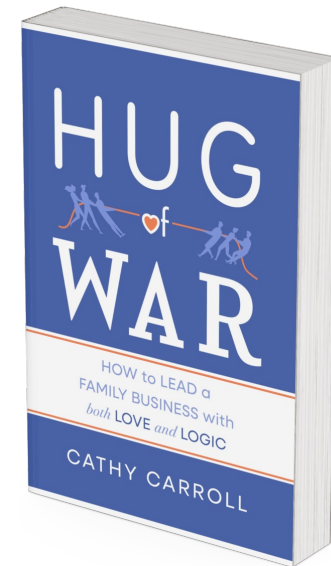
OVERUSES

**Aversion:** To waste my time



## Polarity Principles 7 & 8

7. Strong pole preferences are connected to an identity.
8. Harmonizing poles may necessitate facing your fears.



# How to Face Your Fears

1. Identify your *competing commitments*.
2. Acknowledge your *inherent assumptions*.
3. Design *safe-to-fail, micro-experiments* to test the assumptions.



**Aspiration:** To help family business leaders flourish

Competing Commitments

BENEFITS

- People will like me.

- I will stand for something I believe in and help family leaders flourish.

BENEFITS

Humble

Bold

B  
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OVERUSES

- People will find me boring because I have little to say.

- People won't like me because I'm constantly blathering on about polarities.

OVERUSES

**Aversion:** To waste my time

# How I Faced My Fears

1. My competing commitments: *I want to be liked and I want to help people understand polarities.*
2. My inherent assumptions: *If I promote my book, people won't like me.*
3. My experiments: *I started blogging. (I even vlogged!) I learned that people don't dislike me because I'm promoting a book. And if they are judging me, it's ok. Their judgment is more about them than me.*



# Common Family Business Polarities

Family Norms :: Business Norms

Independent :: Interdependent

Hierarchical :: Egalitarian

Compete :: Cooperate

Support :: Challenge

Emotion :: Reason

Mine :: Ours



# Common Succession Polarities

Privileges :: Responsibilities

Equal :: Equitable (fair)

Reveal :: Conceal

Same :: Different

Urgent :: Patient

Control :: Trust

Merit :: Inherit



# Common Governance Polarities

Go it Alone :: Go with the Group

Top Down :: Bottom Up

Command :: Co-Create

Structure :: Flexibility

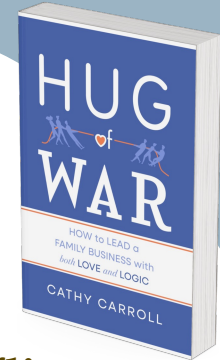
Include :: Exclude

Same :: Different

Me :: We



# Also in “Hug of War:”



## Power Dynamics

Domain Crossover  
Shadow Influencers  
Blocking Power

## Internal Conflict

Responsibilities  
and  
Privileges

## External Conflict

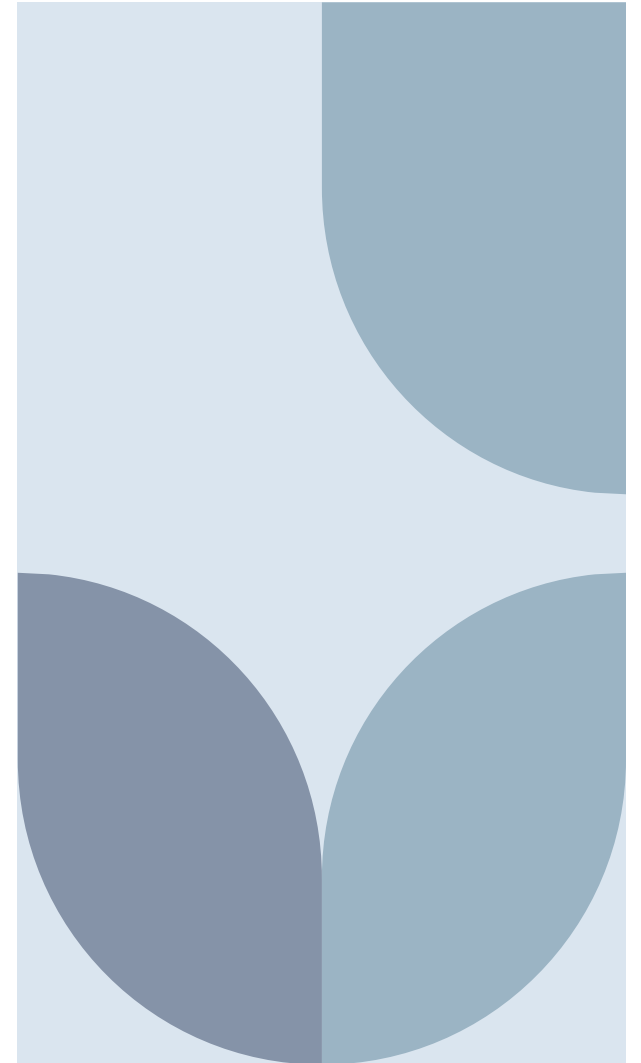
Task Conflict  
Relationship Conflict  
Polarity Conflict

## Succession

## Governance



*Q&A*



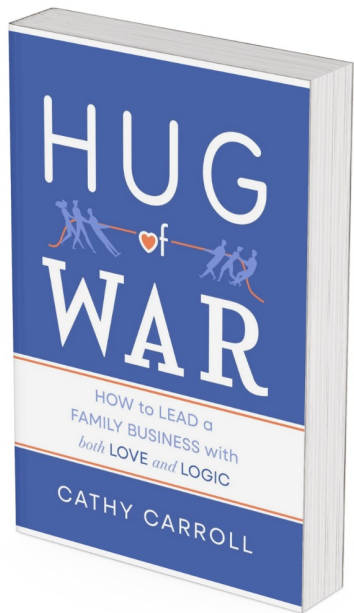


*The need for either/or is driven by our **lack of capacity for vulnerability**. Holding the tension is really hard. - Brené Brown*

*When the **opposites are realized to be one**, discord melts into concord, battles become dances, and old enemies become lovers. - Ken Wilber*

*By neither denying or ignoring those tensions but living consciously in them we stand a greater chance of being pulled **toward the third way**. - Richard Rohr*





**Thank you!**

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