



YARBROUGH  
*group*

WORLD WIDE CONSULTANTS WHO  
TEND THE FLAME OF SUSTAINABLE CHANGE.

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# POLARITY BASICS

ACIS Heads' Meeting, June 2019

*Facilitated By*

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# INTRODUCTIONS

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- A little about Lindsay
- Introducing you to you
  - What do I bring to the group?
  - What do I want from others?
  - What is one issue I've been facing on which I would like help gaining new perspectives?

# GOALS

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- Basics of Polarity Theory
- Looking at a chronic issue differently
- Practice in Multiple Applications
  - Personal / Individual – Looking inside
  - Professional
  - Team / Group – Looking around
- Practice talking through a polarity – Looking forward (*Handout*)

# #FAKEGOALS

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- Everything there is to know about polarities
- Personal and professional plans to solve every issue you've ever faced
- A plan that will be set forever and ever
- Affirmation that your point of view is the same as everyone else's.

# AGENDA

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- Introduction and welcome
- Expectations
- Polarity overview
- Personal application
- Lunch
- Professional application
- How to talk to people about polarities.

# EXPECTATIONS



FORM 3 GROUPS (COUNT 1, 2, 3)



*4's*  
*(facilitator)*

EXPECTATIONS OF  
THE GROUP

# EXPECTATIONS

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1. Show up
2. Stay here
  - Phones/emails outside the room if necessary
  - Or let the group know when you'll be back
3. Pay attention to what has heart and meaning to you
  - Keep the “balcony” in mind
4. I will keep to the agenda and cover the material to serve the individual needs and the group needs.



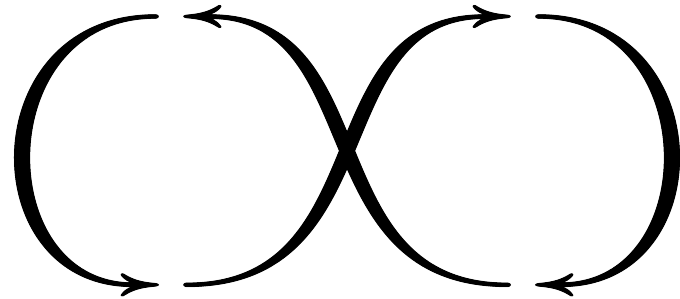


LET'S GO!



**Polarity**  
**Paradox**

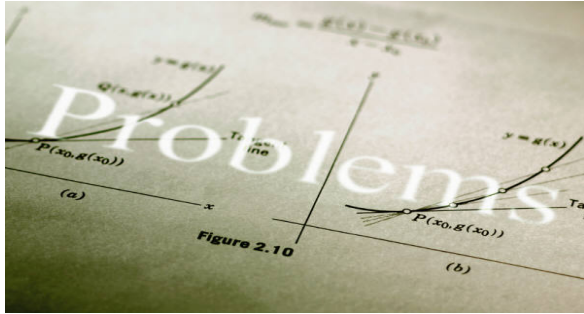
Contradictions  
Dilemma  
Tensions  
Duality  
Interdependent Factors  
Competing Values  
Dichotomy  
Opposite Strengths  
Opposing Thoughts



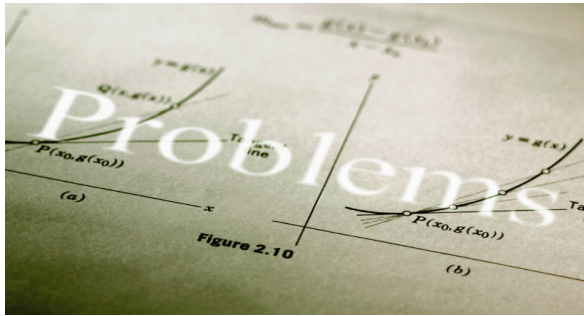
FROM → TO



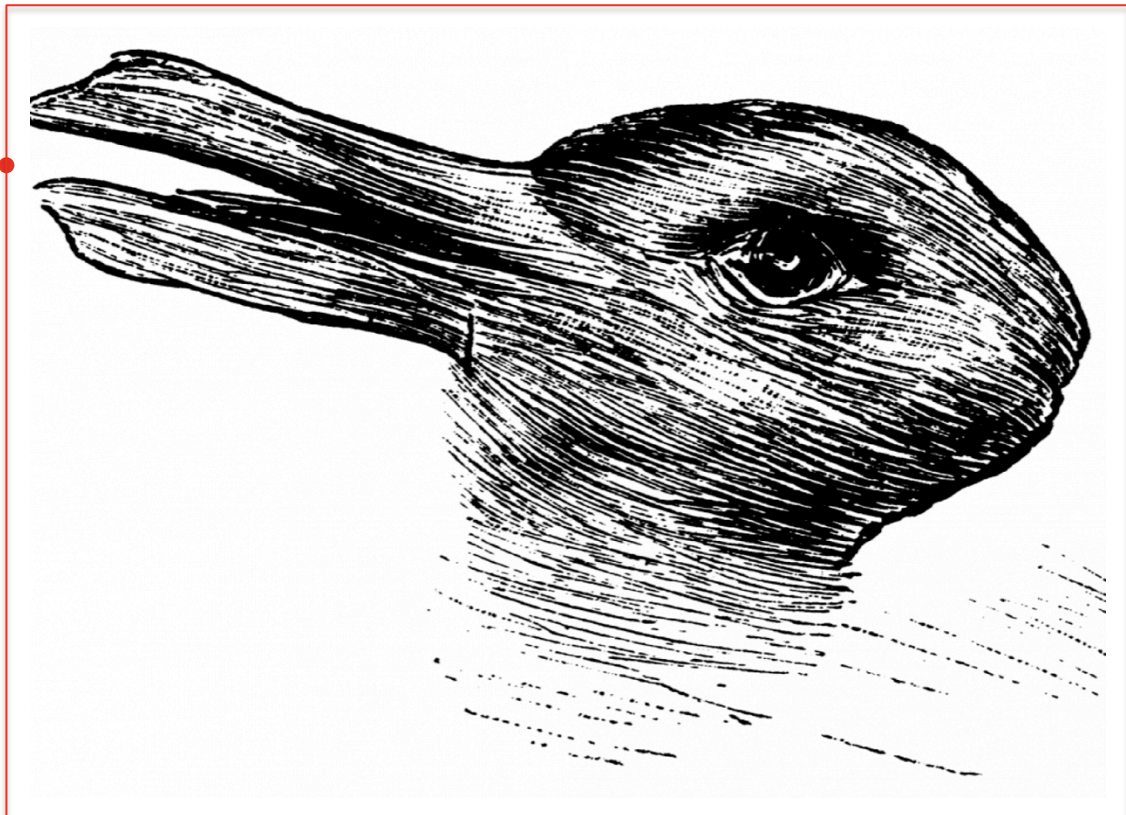
# SOMETIMES CHALLENGES ARE NOT EITHER-OR; HIDDEN DIMENSIONS EXIST



A POLARITY IS A SYSTEM, WITH UPSIDES AND DOWNSIDES, AND PARTS THAT RELATE TO ONE ANOTHER

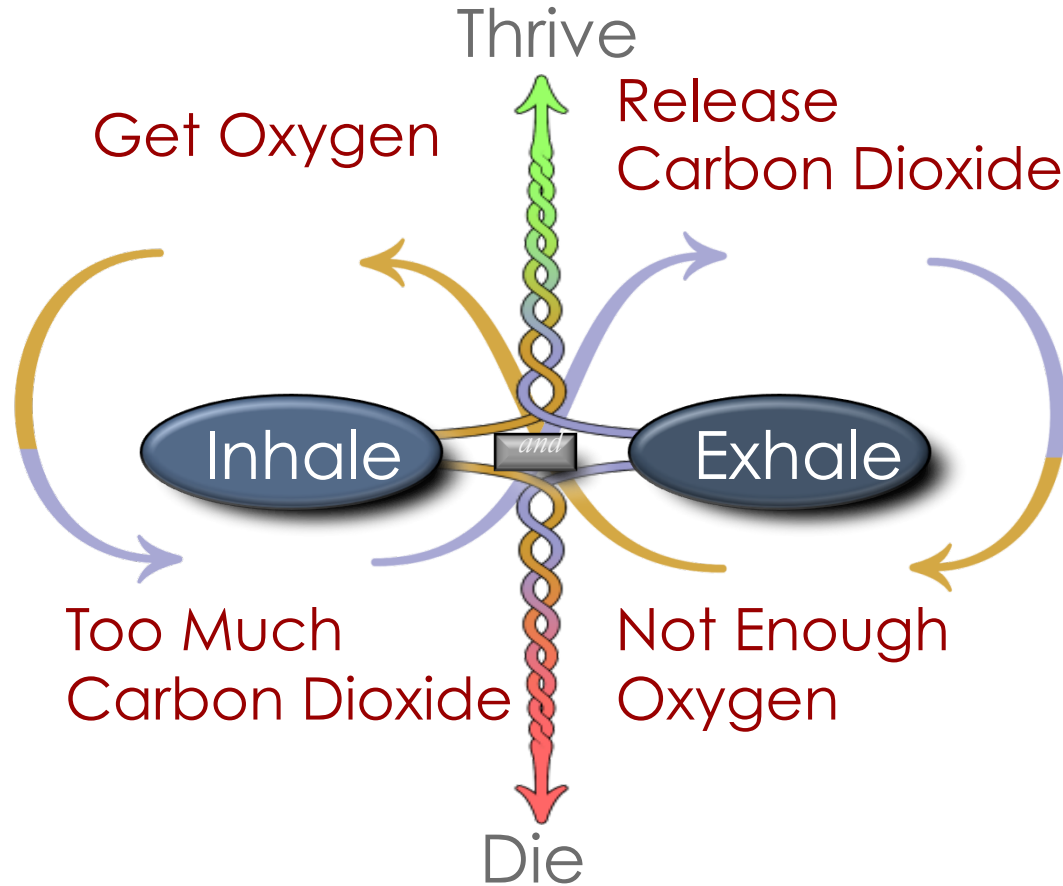


# WHAT DO YOU SEE?

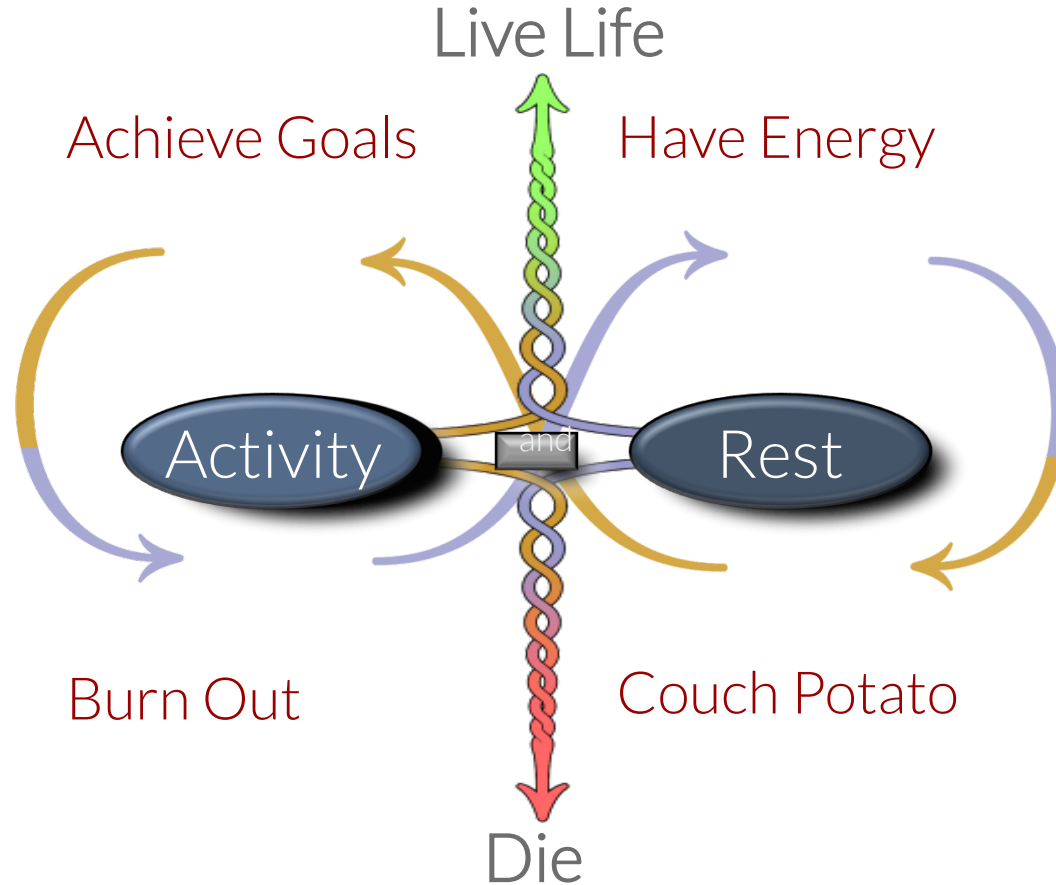


Look at several ways

# THE DYNAMIC



# ANOTHER CONSTANT POLARITY







# EXAMPLES YOU MAY FIND FAMILIAR

- SWOT/Internal Factors & External Factors (Albert Humphrey)
- Assertive & Cooperative (Thomas Kilmann)
- Serving & Leading (Robert Greenleaf)
- Vision & Current Reality (Elise Boulding)
- Internal & External Individual & Collective (Ken Wilbur)
- Introversion & Extraversion (Carl Jung)
- [Stability & Change]
- [Short-term & Long-term]
- [Action & Reflection]
- [Intent & Impact]
- [Planning & Execution]
- [Justice & Mercy]
- [Freedom & Equality]
- [Work & Home]
- [Internal focus & External focus]
- Power & Love (Adam Kahane)
- [Mission & Margin]
- Preserve Core & Stimulate Change (Jim Collins & Jerry Porras)
- [Centralization & Decentralization]
- [Activity & Rest]



# KEY POINTS

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- ∞ Greater Purpose Statement (GPS) is necessary to keep clarity. Deeper Fear helps get the worry out in the open.
- ∞ Both poles are important.
- ∞ Poles are interdependent opposites that need each other over time in order to sustain the system.
- ∞ Leveraging a polarity ≠ Same amount of time spent on both poles
- ∞ If you over focus on either pole to the neglect of the other, you will get the downside of the focused pole.
- ∞ To move out of the downside of either pole, you must focus on the upside of the opposite pole.
- ∞ The oscillation is ongoing...the natural tension between is unavoidable, unsolvable, and indestructible.
- ∞ Action Steps and Early Warnings need to be S.M.A.R.T.

**S.M.A.R.T.**  
**S**pecific  
**M**easurable  
**A**ctionable  
**R**easonable  
**T**ime-bound

# LEADERSHIP POLARITIES

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- ∞ Expert + Learner
- ∞ Candor + Diplomacy
- ∞ Directive + Collaborative
- ∞ Short-Term + Long-Term
- ∞ Idea Generator + Action Taker
- ∞ Intent + Impact
- ∞ Activity + Rest
- ∞ Self + Other
- ∞ Holding On + Letting Go
- ∞ Individual + Team
- ∞ Part + Whole
- ∞ Team + Organization
- ∞ Task + Relationship
- ∞ I Show Care + I Show Competence
- ∞ Hope + Reality

- ∞ Control + Empowerment
- ∞ Structured + Flexible
- ∞ Unconditional + Conditional Respect
- ∞ Planning + Implementation
- ∞ Directive + Participative
- ∞ Mission + Margin
- ∞ Preserve Core + Stimulate Change
- ∞ Confidence + Humility
- ∞ Realistic + Visionary
- ∞ Logical + Creative
- ∞ Quick Decision Making +  
Reflective Decision Making
- ∞ Thinking + Feeling
- ∞ Strategic + Tactical

And the list goes on...



# MAPPING A POLARITY

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- Name the poles (your preferred pole on the left side).
- GPS → Why is it worth it?
- Deeper Fear → What's the worst thing you can imagine happening if you don't work on this?
- Qualities in the quadrants above the pole names.



# MAPPING A POLARITY CON'T

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- Now that you've mapped the middle part of the polarity, it is time to assess where you're at.
  - How often are you getting the benefits?
  - How often are you getting the downside?
  - Mark it on the chart on the back of your polarity map.

## Action Steps

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

Almost Always  
Often  
Sometimes  
Seldom  
Almost Never

## Early Warnings

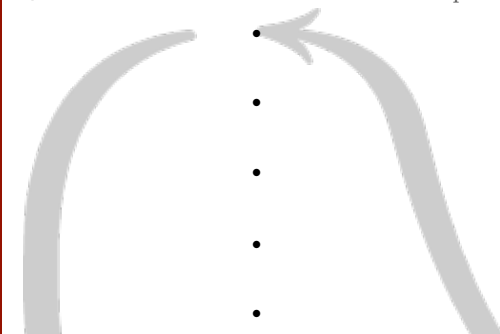
Measurable indicators (things you can count) that will let you know that you are getting into the downside of this pole.

Almost Never  
Seldom  
Sometimes  
Often  
Almost Always

Greater Purpose Statement (GPS) *Why leverage this polarity?*

**GPS**

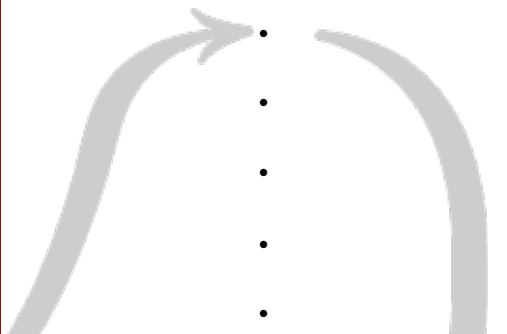
Upsides - Positive results of focus on the left pole



**Left Pole**

Downsides – Negative results of an overfocus on the left pole to the neglect of the right pole.

Upsides - Positive results of focus on the right pole



**Right Pole**

Downsides – Negative results of an overfocus on the right pole to the neglect of the left pole.

**Deeper Fear**

Deeper Fear – *Loss of GPS*

## Action Steps

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

Almost Always  
Often  
Sometimes  
Seldom  
Almost Never

## Early Warnings

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

Almost Never  
Seldom  
Sometimes  
Often  
Almost Always



# MAPPING A POLARITY CON'T

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10 minutes on your own - *please do take this time. What else could you do to nudge yourself?*

10 minutes coaching each other (5 min per person)

- Action Steps
  - For your preferred pole are likely things you're already doing.
  - For your new pole little nudges
  - High Leverage: Action step that works to help both sides.
  - Should be S.M.A.R.T.
- Early Warnings
  - For your preferred pole need to be EARLY. Things you're willing to have happen.
  - For your new pole can be a little later. You're not likely to let yourself get to them...
  - No such thing as a high leverage early warning.
  - Should be S.M.A.R.T.

## Action Steps

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

- Share 1 opinion in every meeting.
- Take risks on sharing new ideas 1xper month
- HLAS: Ask trusted person how I'm doing with my polarity 1 x per week.

## Early Warnings

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

- People don't meet my eyes during a meeting.
- No one asks me questions in one meeting.

Greater Purpose Statement (GPS) *Why leverage this polarity?*

**Inspired Leader of engaged followers**

Upsides - Positive results of focus on the left pole

- A. Clear opinions
- B. Strong
- C. Bold
- D. Decisive

**Confidence**

- A. Arrogant
- B. Bully
- C. Overly risky
- D. Thoughtless

Downsides – Negative results of an overfocus on the left pole to the neglect of the right pole.

Upsides - Positive results of focus on the right pole

- A. Open to opinions
- B. Collaborative
- C. Taking the time everyone needs (including myself)
- D. Asking questions

**Humility**

- A. Doormat with no opinions
- B. Can't move forward
- C. Scared
- D. Vapid

Downsides – Negative results of an overfocus on the right pole to the neglect of the left pole.

## Action Steps

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

- Ask 3 questions before stating my opinion in 1 meeting per week.
- Ask 2 trusted people about a new idea before sharing it widely 1xper month.
- HLAS: Ask trusted person how I'm doing with my polarity 1 x per week.

## Early Warnings

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

- Important decisions are put off for a month.
- I don't share my opinion for two meetings in a row.
- People tell me they don't know where I stand on an important issue.

**A solo parade no one wants.**

Deeper Fear – *Loss of GPS*





# PROFESSIONAL GROUP



# YOUR WORK POLARITY

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5 minutes

1. Jot down your ongoing struggle. *No more than 1 paragraph. Enough for you to know which one you're considering.*
2. What do you want out of the situation?
3. What does the other party want?
4. Is it a problem to solve or a polarity to leverage?
  - Can you solve your way out of it forever? (If yes, may be a problem.)
  - Is it one decision? (If yes, may be a problem.)
5. If it is a polarity, try naming it.



# NAMING YOUR POLARITY

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- Groups of 3
- Share the name of your polarity. Help coach each other.
  - Can share some of the context if necessary.
  - Goal is to get clear names
- Neutral to Positive?
- Both have the same charge?
- Need both for the health of the system?

10 minutes

When done, put your polarity names up on the flip chart.

# GROUP MAP

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1. Qualities in all 4 quadrants (go for an equal amount)
    - Post it technology10 minutes.
  2. Cluster Themes
    - Try to go for 4 themes in each quadrant10 minutes
  3. GPS? Deeper Fear?
  4. Individually: Assess your school loop
  5. Together: 1 Action Step for each side that would work for any school
- 5 minutes



# READ OUT YOUR MAP

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1. We are leveraging the poles of \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.
2. If we leverage this polarity well we will get GPS.
3. If we don't leverage it we risk Deeper Fear.
4. The upside of \_\_\_\_\_ is... (read upside qualities)
5. If we over do this we get... (read downside qualities)
6. The correction would be to... (read upside qualities in other pole)
7. If we overdo that we get... (read downside qualities)
8. So it is worth it for us to leverage \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ to get GPS.



# MAPPING WITH A GROUP

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1. How was it?
  2. What was different when alone?
  3. How might this be different with your team at your school?
- Helpful in conflict/chronic tension
    - Gives everyone a place to stand
    - Affirms everyone's position
  - Linguistic Specificity
  - Honor emotion and resistance

# TALKING ABOUT POLARITIES WITHOUT TALKING ABOUT POLARITIES



- Please see provided handout

# TAKING IT BACK. WHAT ALL HAVE WE DONE?



1. Personal Application
2. Professional Application
3. Individual Map
4. Group Map
5. Talking about polarities without talking about polarities.



# CLOSURE

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Choose 2 pictures

Connect

one to what you have learned head learning

one to what you have learned heart learning.

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# THANK YOU!

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