

Putting the EI in EDI:

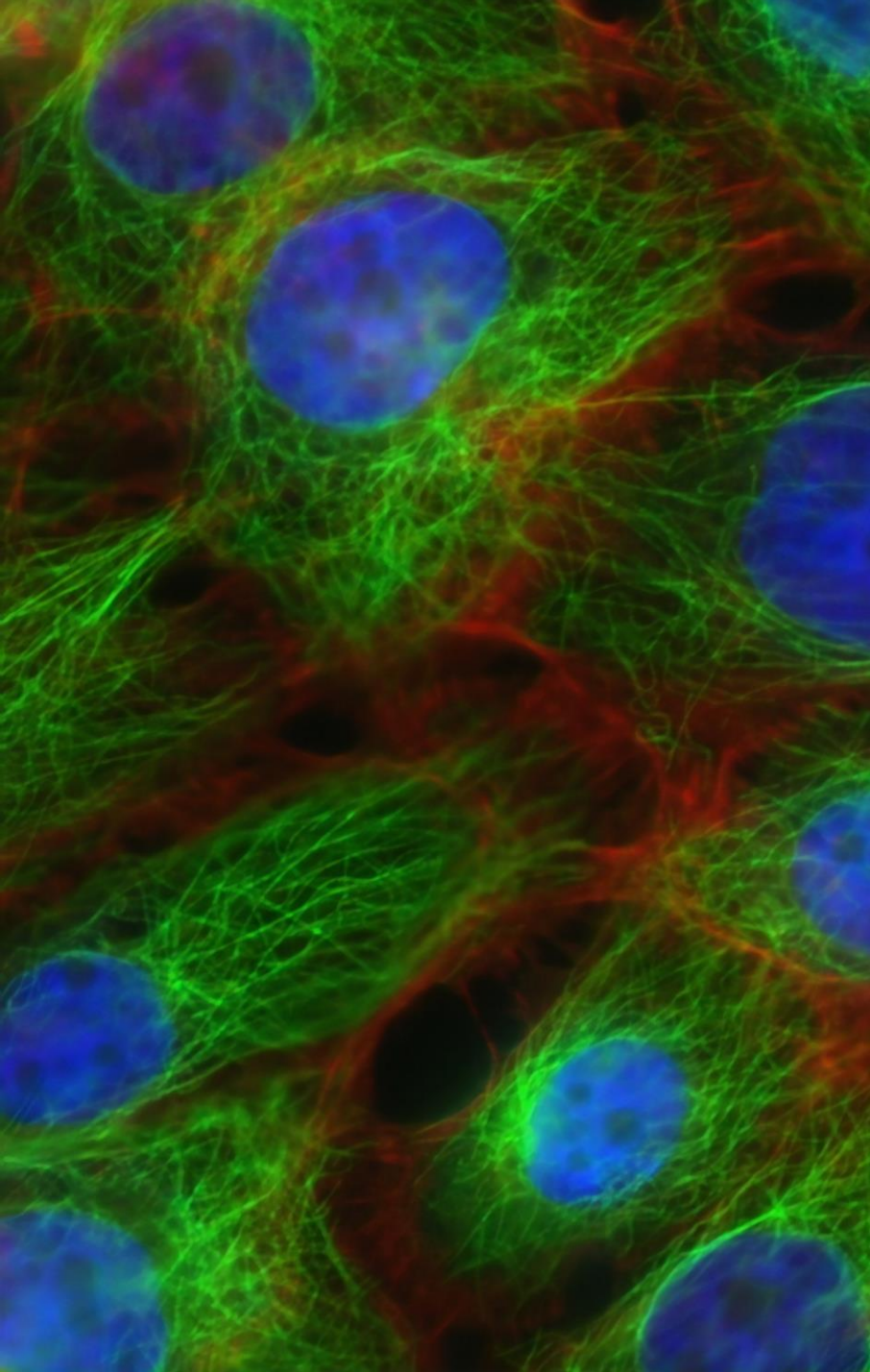
Applying Emotional Intelligence to your
Equity, Diversity, Inclusion work

Karen B. K. Chan

2023



[FLUIDEXCHANGE.ORG](https://fluidexchange.org)



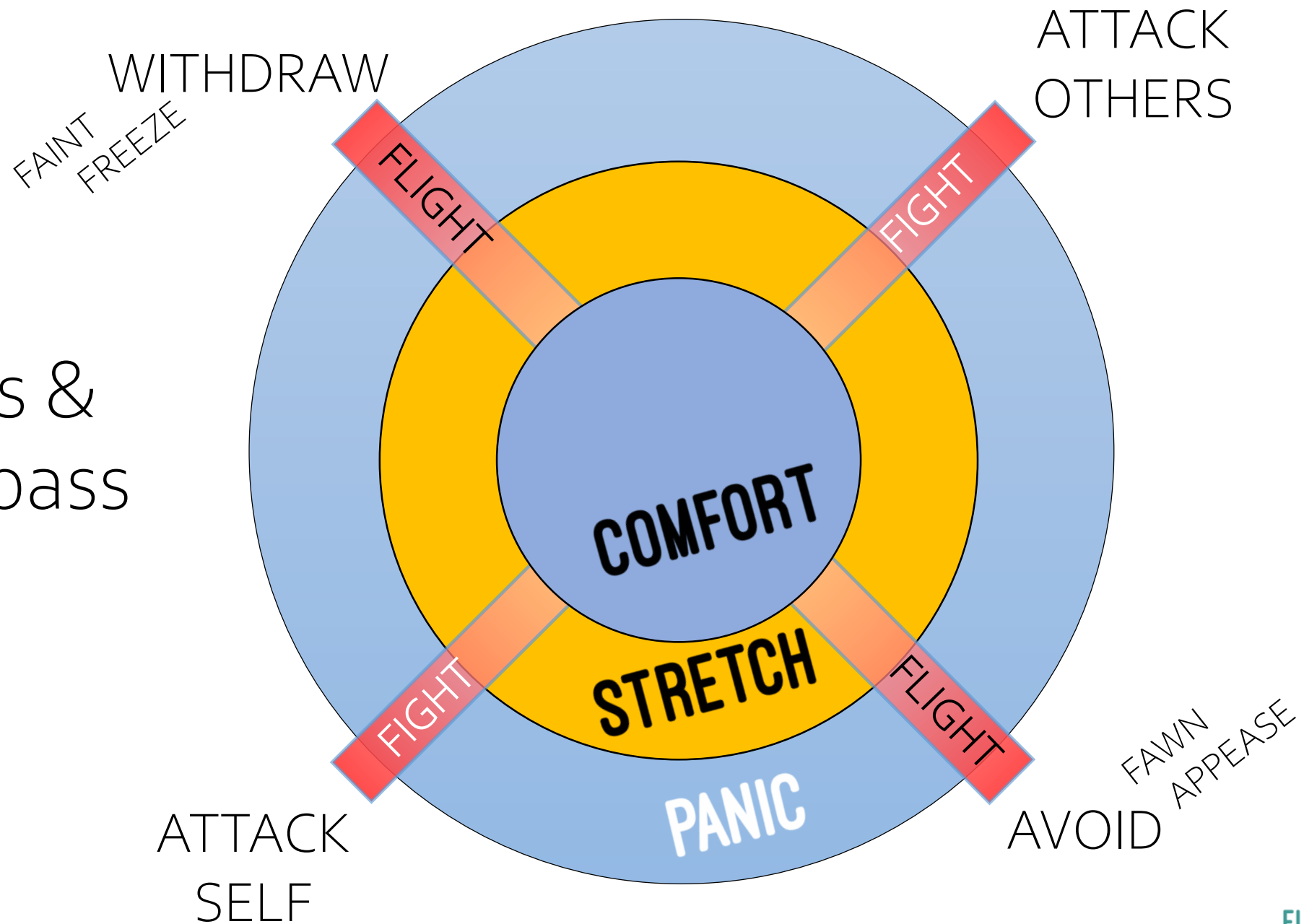
Emotional Intelligence?

- A few different models
- Popular : 5 Domains (Goleman 1995)
 - Knowing your emotions
 - Managing your own emotions
 - Motivating yourself
 - Recognizing and understanding other people's emotions
 - Managing relationships
- Not irrational
- Not positive or negative
- Essential to motivation & change

How is EI relevant to EDI work?

- **Knowing your emotions** – countering bias, clarifying self/other boundary, resilience in failure
- **Managing your emotions** – high stress scenarios, conflict resolution, ability to be realistic, increasing options, adapting to change, work across differences, listening through stress
- **Understanding others' emotions and meaning** – empathy, learning, conflict resolution, problem solving, perspective taking
- **Managing relationships** – both vertical and horizontal, authenticity, avoiding unnecessary conflict
- **Motivating yourself** – resilience, continuous learning, self-care

Zones & Compass



FAINT
FREEZE
WITHDRAW

**ATTACK
OTHERS**

- I label someone.
- I make the other person into an enemy.
- I try very hard to win at all costs.
- I puff up / resort to grandiosity.
- I criticize or gossip.
- I have a hard time apologizing.
- I yell, slam doors, kick or throw things.
- I am condescending and/or dismissive.

ATTACK
SELF

FAWN
APPEASE
AVOID

FAINT
FREEZE
WITHDRAW

ATTACK
OTHERS

- I doubt or obsess over everything I've said or done.
- I am overly aware of other people's judgement.
- I over apologize or apologize when I don't need to.
- I overfocus on ensuring others know I'm a good person.
- I am very hard on myself when things go wrong.
- I become embarrassed or ashamed easily.
- I try to fix everything for everyone.
- I put myself down.

**ATTACK
SELF**

FAWN
APPEASE
AVOID

FAINT
FREEZE

WITHDRAW

ATTACK
OTHERS

- I make myself invisible.
- I shut down or dissociate.
- I give the silent treatment / ignore people.
- I end relationships over seemingly small conflicts.
- I become confused or forgetful when overwhelmed.
- I become uncaring as a defense.

ATTACK
SELF

FAWN
APPEASE

FAINT
FREEZE

WITHDRAW

ATTACK
OTHERS

- I am overly aware of how others feel.
- I can't stand not being liked.
- I have low tolerance for interpersonal tensions.
- I change the topic or joke when things are tense.
- I numb myself to deal with stress.
- I use "positivity" as a way of not facing what's hard.
- I procrastinate.

ATTACK
SELF

FAWN
APPEASE

AVOID



EDI in the Panic Zone – individual

- Virtual signalling
- Beating yourself up as a badge/shield
- Calling Out as the only tool
- Lack of relationships (politics over people)
- Lack of empathy / Dehumanization of each other
- Lack of safer spaces for learning, questions



EDI in the **Panic Zone** – organization

- Culture of fear
- Factions
- Gossip and negative bonding
- Suppression of emotion



EDI in the Stretch Zone - individual

- Listening to each other (including anger)
- Humility
- Openness about privilege and power
- Questions
- Taking risk
- Mistakes
- Repair
- Investing in relationships



EDI in the **Stretch Zone** - organization

- Growth mindset, learning culture
- Safer spaces for marginalized individuals
- Transparency about history, shortcomings, errors
- Leadership is engaged, honest, actively learning
- Deep change: Policy, practice, culture



5 Things You Can Do

1. Know what your Panic Zone looks/sounds/feels like
2. Cultivate Stretch Zone in the workplace: Take care of yourself, including basic needs
3. Cultivate enough safety to take risks
4. Humanize the humans around you
5. Nurture and repair relationships



For further reflection...

What are your Panic Zone tendencies when it comes to EDI work?

How might you return to your Stretch Zone when engaging with EDI issues?

What would it look like when your Panic Zone choices turn to Stretch Zone choices?

Thank you, and take good care.



[FLUIDEXCHANGE.ORG](https://fluidexchange.org)