Inclusive Leadership:
An Alternative to Traditional DEI

Traditional Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) efforts have stalled. People are burned out, demotivated, divided, and frustrated. Inclusive Leadership lets you pause, assess what's not working, reset, and empower your organization to move the needle.

Dr. Elizabeth Dickinson

Independent Consultant & Educator, DEI | Adjunct Professor, UNC Executive Development
Former Associate Dean of DEI, UNC Kenan-Flagler Business School
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First, *About me*

I have two roles: 1) An independent consultant and educator, specializing in Inclusive Leadership and DEI. 2) An adjunct professor at UNC Chapel Hill's Executive Development.

With an academic background and applied experience, I focus on the emerging concept of "Inclusive Leadership" – a personal and organization strategy to empower individuals, organizations, and communities to "reset" their DEI efforts by doing DEI differently. I have a BA, MA, and PhD in Intercultural Communication and experience working in and consulting in corporate, nonprofit, government, and academic settings. I also served as the former Associate Dean for DEI at the UNC Kenan-Flagler Business School.

I help people and organizations:

1 | ADVISE: Leaders, managers, boards, employees on Inclusive Leadership
2 | CONSULT & COACH: Strategy; Equity and DEI audits; Value mapping; Revamping org habits; Decision making: Handling situations and conflict
3 | EDUCATE: Inclusive leadership; Decision making and bias; Cultural intelligence and competencies (identities); Communicating across differences; Leading & managing inclusive meetings; Equitable performance evaluations; Inclusive teaching and classrooms; Difficult conversations and conflict
4 | TAILORED WORK: To meet organizational needs.

Contact me to talk: eadickins@gmail.com, 805-506-0090

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Let's Connect on LinkedIn:

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"Despite my best efforts, I bet you'll find something wrong . . .

When (and not if) this happens, I invite you to be critical *and* extend grace and understanding that this work is messy, every-changing, and imperfect.

Proceed thoughtfully with that in mind—and when you can, use my mistakes to expand and build upon your nuanced understanding of this work. That's how we grow."

Citation*: DEI Deconstructed*, Lily Zheng (2022)

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Today, *We'll cover*

1.	**2.**	**3.**	**4.**
Traditional DEI	**Inclusive Leadership**	**Inclusive Leadership Education**	**Applying Inclusive Leadership**
• What it is • What doesn't work • Effects	• Fundamentals • Why it works • A new approach	• Goals • Topics • Delivery	• In your role & organization • Create change

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First, *What exactly is "traditional DEI/DEIB"?*

Diversity

- Representation of difference in a group

- Race, class, gender, sexual orientation, ability, religion, age, perspective, etc.

- Groups are diverse, people aren't

- Defined by context
- Current terms:
  - *Represented/ Underrepresented*
  - *Historically Included/Excluded*

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Inclusion, Belonging

- Physiological, emotional *feeling* that we have a place and are respected

- *Inclusion*: action

- *Belonging*: result

- Leaders and organizations should intentionally build it

Equity

Equality
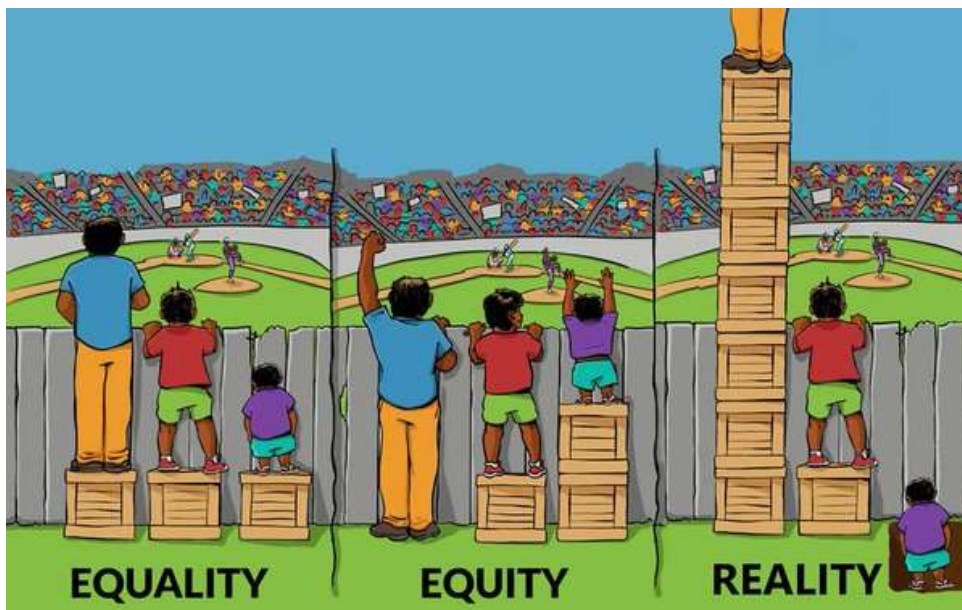- People/groups get same resources/ opportunities
- Goal: equal distribution

Equity
- Begins by admitting different starting places
- Goal: allocate resources/ opportunities to reach equality
- *Equity* – process
- *Equality* – outcome

Individual terms defined

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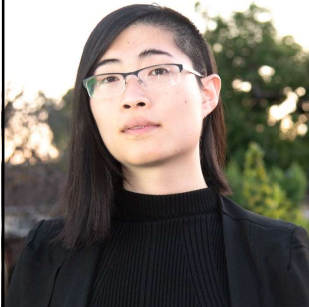

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Scholars *and* Thought Leaders
Think traditional DEIB has stalled

Lily Zheng
DEI Deconstructed

Dobbin & Kalev
Getting to Diversity

Irshad Manji
Diversity without Division

Chloé Valdary
Theory of Enchantment

Zheng, L (2022); Manji, I.; Barron, J. (2019); Dobbin, F. & Kalev, A. (2022); Valdary, S.; Al-Gharbi, M. (2020)

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Why? *5 Limitations of Traditional DEI*

1. **DEI Strategy & Tactics** (missing, unclear, inappropriate, debated, unimplemented)
2. **Sole focus on:** Increasing representation (diversity) & superficial contact
3. **Lack of personal accountability:** "It's not my job:" Waiting for senior leaders, HR, Diversity Officers, task forces, ERGs, etc.
4. **Not embedded within roles, teams, and groups within organization**
5. **Stalled Education:** Ineffective trainings that are *mostly* (but *not* always):
   - Mandatory and compliance/legal-focused
   - One-off, simplistic, repetitive
   - Taught by unqualified educators
   - Lack clear, achievable outcomes; "one-size-fits-all"
   - "At least it's something:" the belief that something is better than nothing

→ *Effects: Burnout, disempowerment, resistance . . .*

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I'm afraid what I say might be judged. I'll be called out, or worse, canceled. It's better not to speak at all.

I want to participate. But there isn't an open playing field to feel comfortable to ask questions (which may seem dumb) about topics we don't know. People are quick to judge and that makes it hard to learn.

As a marginalized person, people expect me to teach them things. It's frustrating and emotionally exhausting. People need to want to learn on their own. And I'm getting tired of waiting.

Lacking sense of voice, agency, and control

As a white man, I feel like I'm seen as a demon when I walk in the room. I care a lot. But when I'm judged, intentionally or not, I check out and disengage.

Race, gender, etc., are overwhelming topics. I don't know how to start or what to do. And I'm not an expert and didn't sign up for this as a job.
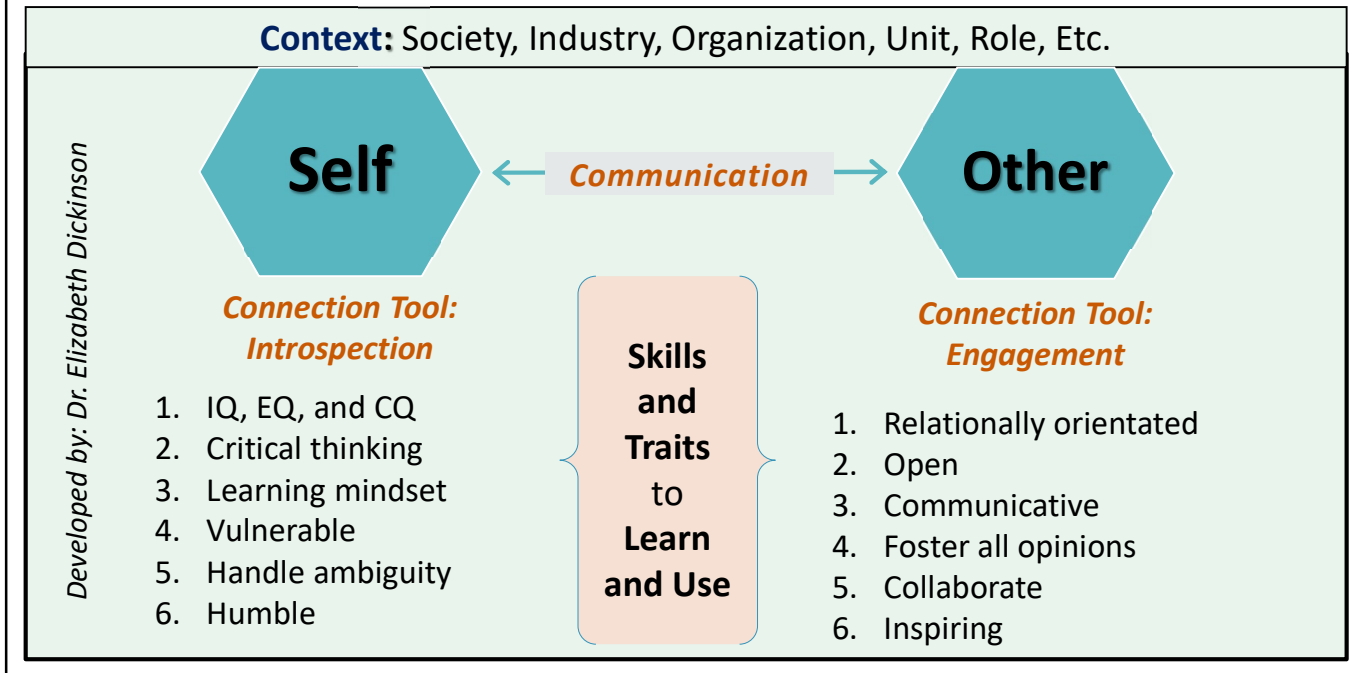
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Inclusive Leadership: *Lead with it to practice DEI differently*

Inclusive Leadership

- Interpersonal and org strategy
- *1st:* Connect with, learn about myself
- *2nd:* Connect with, learn about others: backgrounds, thoughts, structures

- → Connect and engage perspectives and contributions
- → Give back voice, agency, and control

Inclusion, Belonging

- Physiological, emotional *feeling* that we have a place and are respected
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Inclusive Leadership: *What is it, exactly?*

Context: Society, Industry, Organization, Unit, Role, Etc.

Developed by: Dr. Elizabeth Dickinson

Self ← *Communication* → **Other**

Connection Tool:
Introspection

1. IQ, EQ, and CQ
2. Critical thinking
3. Learning mindset
4. Vulnerable
5. Handle ambiguity
6. Humble

Skills and Traits to **Learn and Use**

Connection Tool:
Engagement

1. Relationally orientated
2. Open
3. Communicative
4. Foster all opinions
5. Collaborate
6. Inspiring

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Impact Areas *Within and outside of organizations*

- Recruiting
- Interviewing
- Onboarding
- Communication
  - Verbal, nonverbal, written, transparency
  - Internal comms, External comms
  - Listening
- Decision-making
- Small groups, meetings (formal, informal), gatherings
- Feedback

- Promotions, recognitions, awards
- Performance appraisals
- Innovation
- Problem defining & solving
- Client/public interactions & engagement
- Data (collect, process, analyze, interpret)
- Marketing & external comms
- Finance, accounting
- Boards
- Markets, politics, current events

Discuss in Chat: In your role/org, which area most needs an Inclusive Leadership approach?

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Inclusive Leadership Education

Objectives

- Hit the pause button to connect, discuss, inspire
- Return a sense of voice, agency, control
- Learn differences between *traditional DEI* and the innovative *Inclusive Leadership* approach
- Transition away from single, simple trainings to a systemic, strategic foundational programs
- "Anchor" and reframe with a memorable relaunch
- Deepen understanding of fundamentals and inclusion's role in organizational growth and innovation
- Identify strategies to help people feel inclusion and attachment to their work
- Strengthening engagement, retention, and organizational success
- Apply techniques that strengthen inclusion and equity in day-to-day leadership practices

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Educate Holistically *Overview and goals*

1. UNDERSTAND *THE LANDSCAPE*

Current complex state of DEI within your org. Use peer-to-peer learning to discuss and understand what's not working. Use "Inclusive Leadership" as an alternative interpersonal strategy to reset organization's DEI efforts and empower people.

2. CONNECT & ENGAGE *WITH THE SELF & OTHERS*

Learn and practice Inclusive Leadership skills (EQ, CQ, vulnerability, humility, collaboration, relational orientation). Practice psychological safety to create trust, engagement, and innovation. How to navigate conflict and difficult conversations.

3. INCLUSIVE LEADERSHIP *IN ACTION*

1. *"Inclusive Thinking:" how the mind works and how to make better decisions*
2. *Designing and Leading inclusive meetings*
3. *Inclusive recruiting and hiring practices*
4. *Inclusive performance appraisals*
5. *Analyzing data*

4. APPLY INCLUSIVE LEADERSHIP *TO YOU*

Best practices are only meaningful if you can apply them to your role, teams, and organization. Customize and commit to an area of change. Peer-to-peer and experiential learning help challenge and aid in applying what you learn.

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*How much have
meetings increased
during the pandemic?*

250%

more meetings

Source: "This Is What Happens When There Are Too Many Meetings," The Atlantic, 2022

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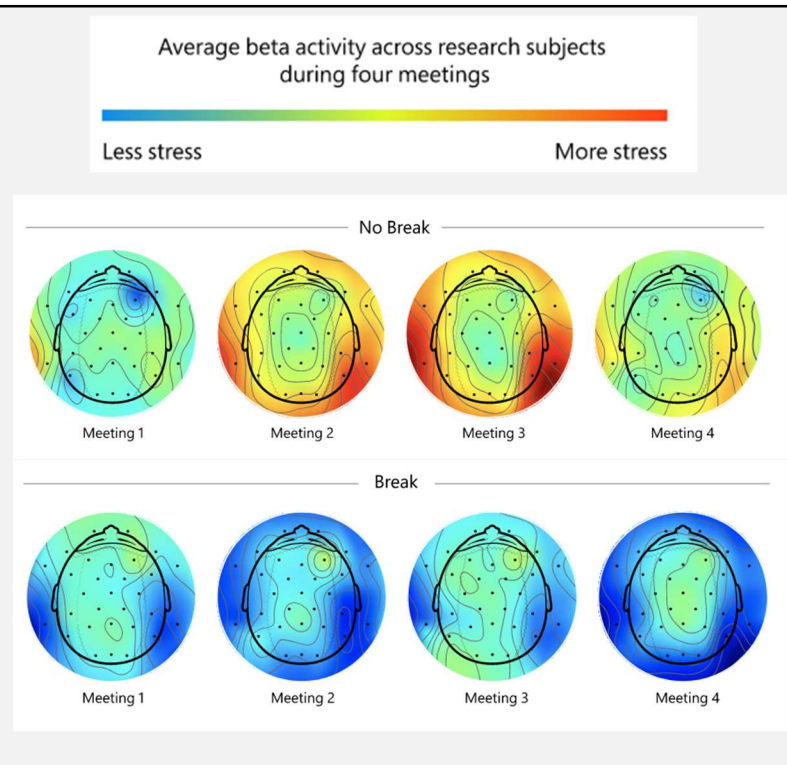
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Effects of Changes

Back-to-back virtual meetings w/out breaks . . .

. . . affect our brains and decrease focus and performance.

→**Breaks between meetings allow the brain to "reset."**

Source: *"Research Proves Your Brain Needs Breaks," Work Trend Index Special Report, Microsoft Worklab, Illustration by Ben Wiseman,*

Average beta activity across research subjects during four meetings

Less stress — More stress

No Break
Meeting 1   Meeting 2   Meeting 3   Meeting 4

Break
Meeting 1   Meeting 2   Meeting 3   Meeting 4

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How I advise, design, and teach Inclusive Leadership

Modes of Delivery

- In-person
- Virtual
- Hybrid
- Synchronous & asynchronous

Lengths of Delivery

- Keynote and invited speeches
- ½ day educational sessions (4 hours)
- Full-day sessions (8 hours)
- Multiple day sessions
- Lengthy courses (15-20+ hours)
- Customized

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Thanks, and let's connect

LinkedIn:

I can offer:

- More info
- Resources
- Readings
- Articles
- Videos
- Podcasts
- Information
- Community
- Connection

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