

What do you want?

By Chris Shaw

The first step in finding a solution to any issue is to define the problem. Until one does that, it is not possible to frame the nature of the desired solution, that is, what you want the solution to look like.

For example, your birthday is tomorrow and you've been promised a breakfast at your favourite restaurant or pub. The larder is fully stocked and chef stands ready to make the meal of your dreams. So, what do you want? Eggs Benedict cooked in a particular way with specific side items? A mimosa or Bloody Mary? Special coffee? And so on. The only limitations to getting what you want for breakfast are the resources of the restaurant (none), the skill of the chef (endless) and the resources to pay for it. All of these things being resolved, the key limitation is you and your conceptualization of what you want.

The same applies if you are planning a house renovation or seeking a romantic partner: First, define what you want as the initial step to getting it. If you have done this step clearly and have the resources, you can have what you want.

If, however, in the above examples you cannot define what you want and leave it to others to choose for you, then you may get something that may not be what you want at all. Hence, the onus remains on you.

What, however, if defining what you want is not something you have given a lot of thought to and you have lived your life *not* choosing what you want but rather accepting the choices that were offered to you by those who might not have your best interests at heart? What if you are asked to define what it is you want for governance in your city, your region, province or the country? What do you want? If you answer, "I don't know, whatever", then you get whatever.

What do you want?

After two years of top down diktat on the pandemic from every level of government, some people say they only want to return to "normal." Fine, what was that exactly? Decision making by others pushed down to you from the top. Did you really want that? Or do you now want something else? If so, what is it? Do you want a bottom up form of democracy that starts with people in your community and works upwards? Do you want a mixture? What examples are there in the real world that can help you decide what it is you want?

Further, if you and your community decide that you want something very different that what you had before, can you have it? Here is the key to deciding: governments really don't care what you have for breakfast, how you renovate you home, or who your partner is. They very much care if you threaten their monopoly on power by defining and demanding what you really want, particularly if that thing is not what has been spoon fed to you all of your life.

Choosing breakfast is easy. Choosing how you want society to provide governance is hard. It requires that citizens decide individually and collectively how they want to live. Do we want an entity like Canada again? What, if anything, did it provide for you besides an illusion of “peace, order and good government” and a pretty piece of paper that proclaimed the Constitution and the Charter of Rights and Freedom that turned out to be functionally useless. Did you really have rights under the still existing system, or were your rights merely privileges? You know the answer.

Why do we have provinces? Do we need them? Why? What do they provide besides another level of control over your life? What about city administrations? Etc.

We’ve all just come through two years of government of all stripes run amuck. For those who were not willing to accept the official narrative, you’ve seen your privileges reduced. Indeed, you now know what the Indigenous population of Canada has known for hundreds of years. You now know what the poor and marginalized have known for most of their lives: You live on and by privilege from government that can vanish with non-compliance or indeed for any reason at all.

What do you want?

Once you take this step, you and your community can begin to consider how to get it.

It won’t be easy, but it is the only way forward for free human beings, in Canada or elsewhere.