



You broke it. Now you fix it.

Politics | Tony Broadbent | Thu, 7 Mar 2019

With things still continuing to fall further and further apart; the centre still unable to get any real kind of hold; and the country within weeks of being left with the consequences of twin extremes of thought; be it 'Leave' or 'Remain'; it's all too clear some sort of new approach is needed to help solve the whole ineluctable mess that is Brexit. The only thing everyone able to agree on that the Brexit process is irredeemably broken. Yet positions on both sides of the aisle are now so fully entrenched it's all but certain the twain never shall meet. The one important question, now, not whether to 'Leave' or 'Remain', but how on earth to bridge the divide.

Could that old saw, "You broke it. You fix it," so redolent of bullish behaviour in china shops, possibly lead to a new collocation? A new contractive name to catch the eye and ear; tickle the emotion, titillate the mind; a diminutive designation designed to help get things moving again after two-year's of Brexit regulatory impasse?

If so may I humbly offer up: 'Brexfix'?

Not, of course, to be confused with the regulatory benefits of a hearty breakfast of two Weetabix, but a good start towards pumping new heart into any and all new avenues of thought or directives concerning Britain's still-born decision to leave the European Union.

The most pressing question: How best to 'Brexfix'?

Or better yet...on behalf of all us left waiting on the shingle...how to get the right people to come join in the dance...get them even to take the first steps without everyone immediately treading on everyone else's tail?

I'll admit, here and now, that a 'guaranteed to succeed or your money back' sequence of 'Brexfix' dance steps...“will we, won't we”...“right-foot-in, left-foot-out”...is quite beyond me, but if the many splintered factions of both parties were to begin to adopt a more positive attitude, a more open mind-set...even a simple spirit of good-naturedness...it would surely give us a better chance of finding a more equitable solution.

Well it would, wouldn't it? But as they say: “It takes two to tango.”

So let me offer my two-pfennigs worth.

Maybe, just maybe, as so many seekers of enlightenment did in the past, it's time to look beyond Europe and pivot towards the East for guidance; to look to the past to see a path to the future; even if only to look for help in how to fix things when they're broken. As there's any number of lessons we can take from the East if we all had a mind to.

The first such idea, perhaps, one not too overly familiar in British and European business and manufacturing circles, but a remarkably potent one, nonetheless. A Japanese concept called 'Kintsugi': The ancient art of fixing

what's broken. A practice that elevates both the breakage and the ensuing somewhat humbling process of repair; all too often, in our all-consuming consumer society, the road less taken; into being the most enduring part of an object, in fact, its very strength. A mindfulness process that recasts the 'breaking' of an object into it being the most important part of that self-same object's history. And, this, rather than seeing the attendant broken mess as something to be disowned or summarily dispensed with.

Perhaps much more familiar is the concept of 'Kaizen': "change" (kai), "for the good" (zen). The idea of continuous, incremental improvement that also originated in Japan, based on the philosophical belief that everything can be improved, any problem solved, in time, by taking tiny incremental steps. The concept first introduced into post-war Japan; a culture that venerated strict adherence to tradition and thus was very resistant to change; to help instill a "change for the better" mind-set.

And very effective it proved to be, too. Especially, in Japan's newly emerging automobile and electronics manufacturing industries, as was the intent all along. As 'Kaizen' not only gave permission to change, it also supplied a simple guide on how to change: by urging people to seek out and make continuous, incremental, small steps towards improvement in whatever aspect of work they were involved in.

In practical terms it suggests that if you do commit to making small, steady, modest, gradual, incremental, continuous steps while working to achieve whatever end it is you've resolved to accomplish, success is not only possible, it's all but inevitable. And much more effective, don't you think, than the British Government's post-war mandate to a population faced with years of continuing austerity measures to simply "Make Do And Mend." (The closest UK politicians have ever come to the spirit of 'Kintsugi' although without having nearly enough of the requisite precious metal to bind the broken pieces together and make the end result a thing of beauty.)

The obvious questions as regards 'Brexfix': a Second Referendum or no; and, if so, the number as well as make-up of the questions on the ballot. Followed by the inevitable: can anyone or anything ever change anyone's mind once they're set in their thinking? All and everything, quite, unanswerable, I would imagine, unless a sufficient number of people are prepared to practice a little 'Kintsugi' and a touch of 'Kaizen.' In which case: "It's 'Brexfix'-time, everyone! Time to go back to the future."

Disclaimer: Views expressed by writers in this section are their own and do not necessarily reflect the views of 7Dnews.