

Certainty a casualty as walkout drags on

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Since I began writing about my experiences on the picket line for the *Star* two weeks ago I have noticed that my moods and, especially, some of my opinions have been changing according to what I read, hear, or see.

Has this happened to you?

Opinions change all the time. We are constantly making choices that affect our opinions. Maybe you were sprinting to work today and accidentally ordered an Irish Cream coffee instead of your regular decaf blend and realized that you were missing out on an entire universe of coffee-delight.

Maybe the opening of temporary dump sites or the too-late arrival of an ambulance caused your strike outlook to shift. News about the growing dangers of H1N1 could also have reversed your opinion on when this strike should be over.

I guess your opinion is supposed to shift and change, morphing into something new.

There are things in my life that I have changed my stance on, even before the strike:

Stuffed animals are, unfortunately, not a valuable commodity.

Perhaps my mother has been right on one minor, moot point.

I will regrettably never achieve my dream of being an early bird, and will have to catch the worm in the afternoon with the rest of society.

As for the strike, I'll admit it: Some issues are making me think twice about my positions.

Last Friday I took a field trip to Christie Pits, a closed temporary dump site. Originally, I had thought putting garbage in out-of-the-way spots in parks and treating it with pesticides was okay. But after seeing how close the piles were to the playground – and smelling the stench – I now agree with residents that using nasty chemicals to ward off rodents is a bad idea.

Also, the potential escalation of the H1N1 flu virus in autumn makes me worried. I didn't realize Toronto was in jeopardy. Both sides need to reconsider how long the walkout can go on.

And striking in the rain, something I thought I could handle, makes me feel wet, cold, uncomfortable and overall miserable.

However, there are some striking issues that I refuse to budge on:

I would still like to get back my original job, teaching toddlers to float on their stomachs.

The strikers got it right in using multiple, small picket lines to get their voices heard. It has raised awareness.

Can public opinion sway? Can attitudes morph?

Mine has, in some cases. And hopefully the cleanup after Caribana, the pending VIA Rail strike and the precedent to be set if Windsor's strikers settle will lead to an end to this strike, once and for all.

Tamie Dolny's original story for the Star, about being a teen picket, generated such response that she has been hired to write a regular column for the duration of the city workers' strike.