

S O M E B O D Y  
L I K E S Y O U

Port Hope, Ontario, Canada

Growing up  
in Chicken  
Dance.

sometimes poetry  
slips into your  
mind and takes up  
residence.

The backbone of a place like Port Hope is  
someone like you, someone exactly like  
you.

*What to do with this  
publication - once  
you are finished  
with it.*

If you had enough, what  
would you do?

What you know something you can never unknow it.



You are not alone.



When a town has the word 'hope' in it.

There is a wealth of music, theatre, arts here. How do we encourage people to see, hear, participate? Let's designate Port Hope as a waterfront arts community. Make it easier for the arts presenters to advertise and access government grants. Maybe the town could create exploratory arts maps? The town could subsidize rents for ateliers, workshops or studios, especially of an artist, artisan, or designer. The combination of art, music, theatre and food with a mix of interesting retail will draw people from Ottawa, Kingston and Toronto. Get a highway sign on the 401 -- Port Hope: Artist Community.

Most people enjoy art/music/dance when it is free. People will come to free festivals where artists are funded through sponsors or government grants. Nuit Blanche type events. [Nuit Blanche is an annual all-night art event]. Artists always make a place cooler.

Port Hope is a fine place to be, live, work, love. It must be, people are moving away from big cities to live here, to raise families and to retire.

Maybe we could have two currencies. One is cash or credit. The other could be cookies, prepared meals, yard work, babysitting, a poem, a painting, a private concert. When you need a product or a services and you are asked how you want to pay -- offer barter or a combination of barter and money. [barter: exchange goods or services for other goods or services without using money]

I have long suspected that people who wade into the Ganaraska River on those long flat rocks below the Walton Hotel are actually performing a kind of renewal ceremony. They don't splash and laugh, I can't say i have ever seen them do that... they simply sit on the rocks, facing downstream – ones and twos and three of them...sometimes a group. The mighty Ganny is less mighty in the late summer months, the water a refreshing change from the heat and perhaps the Ganny offers more. What if these bathers know what we have yet to discover?

What to do with this publication once you are finished with it? Maybe add your name to the outside back cover and share it forward. Very few people recieved it. We wanted you to have it. Somebody Likes You. Please want someone else to have it. Please like someone else.

Yearling wolves produce howls ending in a series of dog-like yelps.

I get my fabricating done by welding and machining, so there's no need to do it with words.

**In the mid-20th century, there was a bounty on wolves of any kind, including brush wolves and timber wolves, so the natives where we were (in Big Trout Lake they were called Swampy Cree) would kill the wolves to collect the money, and then raid the den and place the baby wolves to grow up with their dogs in the village. The resultant interbreeding kept their sled dogs strong. My mother had decided to get a pet and in a walking tour of the native village, picked out a baby timber wolf from a litter that had just arrived from the wild. Now named Skippy, he was fed regularly on lake trout, of course more than in the wild, so he grew to a very respectful size, larger than any wolf in the wild that the local natives had ever seen.**

He was the alpha male on the island and ruled the dogs from the native village. He would return home some mornings with a few wounds from a night of defending his position. When my dad and Skippy went to places like the dump, the native dogs would all quickly get out of his way. *[continued...]*



## Yearling wolves continued

Skippy would go running ahead into the dump; there would be scores of dogs vacating the dump as he came running in adorned with cans and rubbish.

Incidents of his intellect were evident from early on. When I was a baby and would wake crying in the middle of the night, he would come into my parents' room and make sure someone got up to attend to the issue. When the warm bed was vacated, he was first to fill the spot. When my dad got up to let him in during the night, it was a race to get the warm spot...

If he found little birds that had fallen from a nest, he would collect them in his mouth one at a time and deliver them to my mother's hand unharmed. He became a true family member and had no problem with kids riding him like a horse. He adapted to going for tractor rides and airplane rides. He was large enough to pull a sledge by himself. Every day he would leave the house with my dad and walk to the office building on the weather station with him. He would sit on the steps and wait for a while, then go on a daily adventure.

When the work day was done, he would be back on the steps waiting for my dad and walk back to the house with him. My father would go to great lengths to pretend to go to work to catch him off guard to put on the harness; he seldom was successful, but as soon as the sleigh was being human-pulled, Skippy would show up to go along. One of the carpenters in Big Trout would kid around with Skippy...he thought it was funny to swing his leg under Skippy when he wasn't looking and trip him. A few days later, he was carrying a load of materials and from out of nowhere Skippy showed up and ran between his legs and put him on his butt.

When we moved to Toronto, we lived at my Grandmother's place in the Pape and Danforth area. Every morning my Dad and Skippy would walk to the streetcar on Bloor. My dad would board the streetcar and Skippy would walk back to the house. When my dad returned from work, Skippy would be at the car stop, waiting to walk home with my dad. There would, of course, be people crossing the road to walk around the huge wolf sitting on the street corner.

We had a wonderful contributing family member who happened to be a wolf...he was strong and fierce when he had to be, gentle, loving and super smart...he is still missed. Are all wolves like that? The intellect part for sure. There are good and bad people just like animals; people tend to be a product of their environment and the interactions of others. I suspect that the way he was treated had a lot to do with his demonstrated personality and a reflection of the strong gentle nature of my dad, who he respected as the alpha personality in his world.

We see now in our world that animals like geese don't run when humans are around, because they learn that there is no real threat. They are certainly wary as a natural reaction to strangers, but comfortable with man. So wolves from the wild, not having to run from man every hour or dealing with the effects of man destroying their habitat will act accordingly. They will be cautious initially with humans but will develop trust when trust is earned.

*This is my remembering, collaborated by my family - told and retold to my sons.*

Have you read 'Never Cry Wolf' [1963] by Port Hope's own Farley Mowat?



# Lessons about Enough from The Three Kiddies Called Gruff

(with apologies to the billy goats)



The first to feel the air outside her mother's womb was the largest. She was called Wondra. The second, slightly smaller one, entered the world without incident. Her name was Frankie, in memory of her grandfathers, both Franks, both deceased. When the final daughter, the tiniest triplet, arrived alive, her parents were so overjoyed they called her Felicity.

Their birth had not been in the cards. Their existence, occupying an overwhelming centrality in the lives of their parents was more than they could ever have imagined.

Here's how it happened.

To a small community where the river wound through the town like a snake and the people seemed nothing out of the ordinary, came a couple in their early 40s, Mark and May Gruff. The Gruffs had each spent many years in university and even more making their way into demanding, high-profile positions at the same workplace, which is where they met and married.

The civil ceremony was in a lovely boardroom overlooking the city.

Life continued apace – at a fast pace – and they eventually decided they had had enough of city living. They were weary of working too hard for too long. They wanted to find a home in a slower-moving spot with space for spreading out, entertaining and the like. They went at it with abandon: scouring sites, readying the lot, finding contractors, overseeing construction and finally furnishing and decorating it. They found more than ample pursuits to fill up the previously spoken-for time.

But like the troll in the fable Three Billy Goats Gruff, the notion of “enough,” was novel to them. Until now. They look at their daughters, wide-eyed and no longer wrinkled from the liquid in their mother's womb, each a lesson in the meaning and merit of “enough.”



Forests lower our heart rate and blood pressure and reduce stress hormones. Being in the forest can reduce depression and boost energy. In Japan they refer to the 'Medicine of Being in the Forest' as Shinrin-yoku.



*I will not say that I loved the stillness of the forest, because it was too much a part of my life to be singled out for notice, but that stillness became for me the measure and norm of what life should be and I carry it in my soul still. When I am most in need of rest in the racket and foolish bustle of modern Toronto, I lock the doors and close my curtains and try to recapture the stillness of the forest in which i grew up...*

Excerpted from 'The cunning man' (1994)  
by Robertson Davies.

Somebody Likes You.





# Getting and keeping love

"The first step to take is to become aware that love is an art, just as living is an art; if we want to learn how to love we must proceed in the same way we have to proceed if we want to learn any other art, say music, painting, carpentry, or the art of medicine or engineering. What are the necessary steps in learning any art?"

The process of learning an art can be divided conveniently into two parts: one, the mastery of the theory; the other, the mastery of the practice. If I want to learn the art of medicine, I must first know the facts about the human body, and about various diseases. When I have all this theoretical knowledge, I am by no means competent in the art of medicine. I shall become a master in this art only after a great deal of practice, until eventually the results of my theoretical knowledge and the results of my practice are blended into one — my intuition, the essence of the mastery of any art.

But, aside from learning the theory and practice, there is a third factor necessary to becoming a master in any art — the mastery of the art must be a matter of ultimate concern; there must be nothing else in the world more important than the art. This holds true for music, for medicine, for carpentry — and for love. And, maybe, here lies the answer to the question of why people in our culture try so rarely to learn this art, in spite of their obvious failures: in spite of the deep-seated craving for love, almost everything else is considered to be more important than love: success, prestige, money, power — almost all our energy is used for the learning of how to achieve these aims, and almost none to learn the art of loving."

Erich Fromm (March 23, 1900 – March 18, 1980)

Somebody Likes You.



“If you had  
enough - what  
would you do?”

“Enough” is an interesting word. I looked it up; it has antique Frisian, Norse, High German, Gothic and Old English roots, all of them meaning “it suffices.”

**The idea of having sufficient is completely alien to the consumerist ethic we live by, according to which our consumption defines us, both as citizens and individuals. In our utilitarian, consumerist world, consumption is good in a kind of ersatz moral sense: the more we get of what we desire, the happier we are, and our pleasure adds to the sum total of happiness which is the measure of human welfare.**

This kind of avarice is not something that comes naturally to us as moral agents and products of evolution in a frugal natural world, and so it needs to be drummed in, incessantly, perpetually, by ubiquitous propaganda, by advertising.

By any reasonable standard I have enough. In fact, by most people's reckoning, in most of the world, I have more than enough. Much more. Ditto for almost everybody I know. Our cups runneth over.

**The relevant question, then, is: since you have enough, what are you doing?**

I find that most of the time it's a question of what I'm not doing, or at least trying not to do. I'm trying to ensure that the overflow from my cup doesn't contribute to island of garbage spreading in the Pacific, or harm other people—like the doomed families who scavenge rare metals from e-junk in India. I recycle and compost and buy LED light bulbs. I'm trying to minimize my consumption of meat and dairy products, because that's good for the planet too, but also because there is enough pain and suffering and terror in the world without my adding to it for trivial reasons. And etc.

On the other hand... (now that I think about it) it would be nice to be able to afford

a house cleaner (one who'd do the windows), and a chef who'd come in maybe three days a week. A good vegan chef; probably hard to find around here. Cooking vegan, or even vegetarian, doing it well, is bloody difficult. Try it for a while.

And a gardener, not to do all the work but to help with the big projects, and maybe take care of the driveway in winter. And speaking of the driveway, it would be nice to be able to pave it, so that we don't end up with gravel all over our lawn every spring from the snow blower. God knows what that would cost—the Earth.

And I'm remembering a conversation I had with my nephew, who's a political consultant working in Indonesia. I was complaining about the toll my commute into Toronto was taking on me, and he sympathized: he had a similarly long commute over busy roads to get to his office in downtown Jakarta. "But it helps," he said, "to have a driver." So, maybe a driver too.

And I'm thinking, if I had enough to do all of these things, I would technically have more than enough, more than would suffice. In other words I would have capital. I could be a job creator—a capitalist!

But now I wonder: where would that more than enough come from. What's the source of my capital? According to Marx it comes from paying workers less than the value of whatever it is that they produce, and keeping the difference for myself, or using it to invest in creating more capital. Modern economists will admit though, that capital also comes from ripping-off the planet—treating it as an inexhaustible source of raw materials and an infinite dumpsite.

continued...

I find that most of the time it's a question of what I'm not doing...

## Somebody Likes You.

"It is not artificial intelligence that threatens humanity, it's artificial stupidity."

If you had enough...continued

When job growth and wealth creation are unregulated, the planet suffers. And then, so do we. Welcome to the anthropocene.

Not to worry, says the cognitive scientist/evolutionary biologist/economic futurist: our greatest resource is not the spoils of the Earth, nor our brute labour, but our native intelligence and creativity. These, in fact, are infinite. Knowledge + creativity = an infinite resource. With it, we can go on growing and prospering forever. Technology will lead the way to heaven on Earth, a place of infinite possibilities, of unending bliss, where admittance is automatic—i.e. no annoying moral prerequisites.

Unfortunately, this is a lie. Our intelligence is not infinite, and neither is our access to knowledge. We are creatures embodied in physical forms made up of physical stuff—chemicals, minerals and whatnot. Somehow out of this, reason has emerged—nobody knows how. But it seems a stretch to think that this capacity can somehow transcend its physical embodiment, which is definitely finite, not infinite. There will always be unsolvable mysteries. (Nor, for the record, can computer-based intelligence transcend its imprisonment in sterile silicon to achieve sentience. The predicted AI "singularity" is a hoax. It is not artificial intelligence that threatens humanity, it's artificial stupidity.)

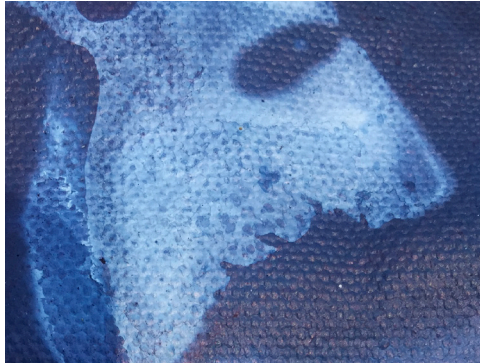
What about creativity? Surely it is infinite. Surely there is no end to what we can think up. Possibly. But where does infinite creativity paired with finite intelligence leave us? It leaves us with infinite possibilities of doing harm, for making colossal mistakes based on incomplete knowledge and faulty assumptions and inferences. Look around. Read the news. Technical progress without moral progress is a recipe for... well, for global warming, species extinctions, thermonuclear war, genocide, all the rest.

Our intelligence may be finite, but we're nowhere close to bumping up against its limits. We remain teachable. Douglas Adams said: "The fact that we live at the bottom of a deep gravity well, on the surface of a gas covered planet going around a nuclear fireball 90 million miles away and think this to be normal is obviously some indication of how skewed our perspective tends to be." Immanuel Kant, too, was mystified by the world he found himself in: "Two things fill the mind with ever new and increasing admiration and awe, the more often and steadily we reflect upon them: the starry heavens above me and the moral law within me."

While science seems currently to be rudderless in the sea of paradox that is quantum physics, we have barely scratched the surface when it comes to understanding the moral law within us, the innate, human ability to grasp the concept of the good, the right, the just, from infancy. The related impulse to be for the other, to instinctively want to help rather than do harm, is a phenomenon we observe every day. (We look for motive in retrospect, in a study we call ethics). We are just discovering that this charitable or altruistic impulse is shared by many non-human species, which leads one to suspect that the good, the moral, is more than just an idea. Good seems to be a component of the world; less an abstract concept like enough, and more a feature of reality, like gravity.

**That's the territory I'd like to investigate—that I feel obliged to explore—while I have enough.**





We see you and your theatre productions popping up all over Port Hope. We want to know: WHO ARE YOU?

When you were 15 years old , you were most likely to succeed at what? Would your father agree? Can you share an example story?

My Dad probably thought I could succeed at hockey at that age. I could put the puck in the net pretty consistently. We had good Ajax Rep teams but the politics in hockey can be horrible. It's a shame. Nothing has changed to this day. I believe there is another Gretzky out there but money and politics play too big a part in minor hockey. It's the same in the acting world. I think it's 10% of actors get 90% of the parts. They use the same people over and over. It's sad.

What was the first time you participated in live theatre? Tell us the story.

Grade 10. I followed a girl into theatre. We did a scene from Rebel Without a Cause where we had to kiss and that's why I started to act. :-) She married someone else and lived happily ever after.

Who was most instrumental in encouraging you to take on live theatre? Please share the story.

Miss Jones. Gr. 10 Drama Teacher. She was pure passion and I loved it. I feel I am pure passion or emotion. I am always something. Drunk maybe.

Why did you pick Port Hope as your home?

Cute small town near Toronto. That's it really.

Where is your favourite spot in Port Hope? Also, what is your favourite time of day?

Anywhere along the river. I love the water. High noon. When the sun is at its peak.

Do you ever go dancing at the Ganny? What's up with that?

Sure! Let's go!

Fishing and dogs are recurring themes - anything else we should know about you?

I am way too emotional.



Somebody Likes You.



# Chicken Dance

We lived in a subdivision on the edge of town.

The houses on our street weren't new, but nothing more had ever expanded beyond the borders of the town limits — hemmed in by a cornfield to the east, highway to the north, and lake to the south.

The neighbourhood had been formally named after the developer who built it, a man of Austrian heritage. Everyone called it Chicken Dance.

We lived in the heart of Chicken Dance. A short street made up of three short blocks, with the cornfield at one end.

The day after my grandfather died, my mom said we didn't have to go to school if we were too sad, so I spent the morning biking around on my banana seat. Another mother called to me from her permanent perch on her wooden stoop, where she smoked and drank from a mug.

“Why aren't you at school?”

“Because my Grandpa died!”

I wheeled off down the block without slowing down.

In the winter, if the weather was just right, the cornfield would flood, then freeze, and we'd skate on it, looking out onto the lake and the skies above it, occasionally bumping over folded corn stalks. One summer, a new phase of the subdivision went up, and

from atop a picnic table in the neighbor's yard we could watch the muddy berms and gunshot sounds of new homes being built.

At the other end was the “old” park.

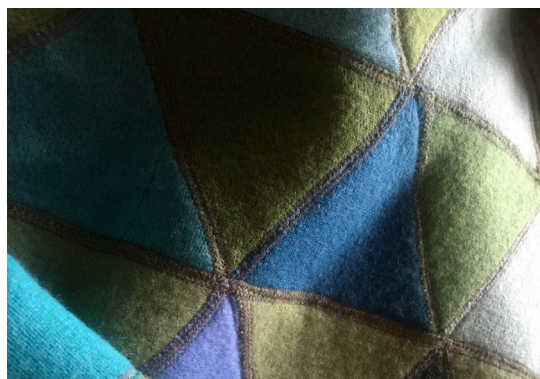
The new park was a little further away, maybe you'd need special permission, or a bike, to get there. It was built on a curve in the road and had bright plastic playground equipment and it was there that I first learned about New Kids on the Block and Ace of Base.

I don't think there was a playground at the old park at all.

Here's what I do know: one got to the park through a tunnel made of cedar shrubbery, a path down the middle. The path extended out from the end of our street, right across from the stop sign at the T-junction, and I liked to imagine a car breaking free of the law, busting through the stop sign and carrying on right down the path.

Though the path was short, a slight hill hid what lay beyond from the street's view. At the end of the path, a wooden bridge stretched over a meandering stream and its floodplain, and then the park opened up into a smallish oval of grass and a gathering of old apple trees.

It seemed like a place that had been allowed to exist. The stream or the cornfield or some bylaw prevented more houses being built, and so the developer fenced



a path and built a bridge and was able to sell a portion of real estate as “park side”. It had been forgotten.

The edge of the park was shaggy with shrubbery and tall grass, and just on the other side of a wire fence was yet another cornfield. The place was always full of birds, and in the springtime, it was downright noisy with robins scolding kids who got too close to a nest, and the strange whirring of the red-winged blackbird.

We brought our buckets for catching minnows and tadpoles, and later in the summer, hunted frogs with cattail poles. Pussy willows and daylilies and even a few daffodils grew wild along the banks of the stream, escapees from the yards that backed onto the old park.

On one of those spring evenings, where the warmth of the day slips away and the sunset is long, it seemed like everyone in the neighbourhood had the same idea, and was out in the streets and headed for the park. Adults gathering in small groups to chat, children running ahead with buckets.

I was just cresting the hill on the path, when I heard, from right beside me “There’s a frog!” A big boy, maybe in grade six or so, was crouched next to the path, almost underneath the bushes. He had a stick in his right hand. A few folks turned. I stopped, and bent over.

“It’s huge!” He yelled, without looking away. I couldn’t see anything, so I got lower, crouching down and peering into the dim space below the cedar. More kids

ran over, leaned in, I felt elbows near mine and as a semi-circle formed the light changed and suddenly somehow I could see him.

The frog was huge. I’ve never seen one bigger. I’ve often thought of it since, and the word that comes to mind is “dinner plate.” It was bigger than a dinner plate. It had short arms that seemed barely able to hold up the heft of its chest and belly, which spilled onto the ground. It seemed impossible that something so enormous, so expansive, so wild, could be here, hidden in our midst, living just down the street in Chicken Dance.

“A bullfrog,” someone said.

The yellow chest heaved, but it didn’t make a sound. Neither did we.

“Bring it out,” someone said, and the boy, the one who discovered the frog, reached for it, but he was still holding that stick. The frog was surrounded, and unmoving. The boy put down his stick, and started to reach for the frog once more, but gave up, leaning back on his heels.

“Let’s leave it,” he said. “Let it be.”





of who i am

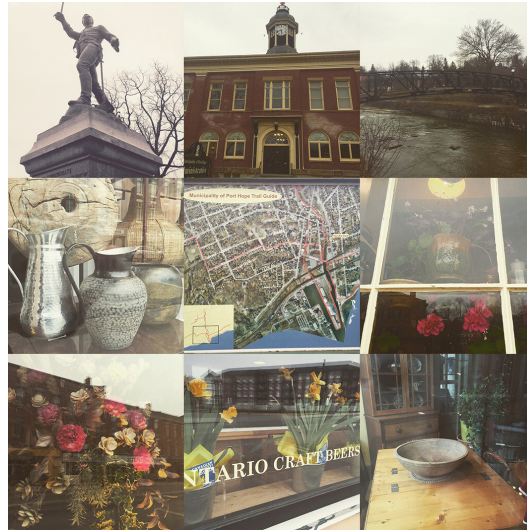
When the world has shown me the back of its hand  
cold and dismissive  
its shadowed eyes refusing to meet mine

When my frayed edges threaten to unravel  
completely and irreparably  
I've forgotten the words to my own story

When the fire of my eternity dwindles to ash  
fading and cooling  
I am tempted to go back to sleep

Until one draws near enough to hear my breathing  
recognizes my essence  
softly turning the pages the book of who I am





**Recently, I ran into a friend** who had just come from the farmer's market north of the 401 at Toronto Street. We had a short conversation about why she felt it was always worth going the extra few km in order to get local produce, meat, baked goods and sometimes, hand-knit socks in crazy colours and patterns. How food quality, the experience and the knowledge that she had supported small local farms all factored in to her decision. How shopping there simply made her happy. She remarked that shopping at the grocery store rarely made her happy - for sure the people were friendly, but the food had, by and large, travelled long distances and been farmed, picked and packed according to questionable foreign standards...

When the new owners of our health food store took to social media last year, they said: if you want us here you have to shop here. We do our very best to supply you with local foods and healthy products. Please hear us when we say: without an increase in our sales - we can't stay in business. If you want a health food shop like ours in Port Hope - please consider shopping with us.

I'm paraphrasing here, but that was the essence of the message and it seemed to work - people began to shop there more regularly. I do. This message is the same for

the other two farmers markets, on Toronto on Toronto Street and Highway 2 and the outside farmer's market in season. If we want locally produced healthy choices, we need to shop locally, to patronize the businesses here and then supplement our shopping in the large grocery stores when we must.

The local jobs that these farms create are important to our economy: the money generated by local farms flows out to our community in jobs, equipment, fuel, repairs and so on because farmers tend to hire people and services where they live and work.

Knowing that we have an opportunity to support local people growing and producing fresh local food is important. Farmers take the biggest risk doing what they do. They are at the mercy of the weather, wondering if their crops will grow from year to year. Last year, 2016, was the longest drought on record in 90 years. But our local farmers still persist in getting as much food to local supporters as possible, food to your table - year after year.

Your community is the people and places around where you live. What you focus on will thrive. Vote with your

\$\$\$.



You don't know me... you probably don't remember meeting me but I remember you and every word of the story that you shared that day. Your story suspended me. When we talked by phone you shared more, a different part of the story... The bus ride, the long walk with no heel on your boot, your wife leaving, receiving the harmonica – which turned out to be a lifeline... To coming home to Rice Lake, becoming content, happy, in love, proud of your boys, inspired and open to catching and sharing stories... Hoping to right wrongs and make a difference in the life of your people and all people.

Don't throw it  
at him. Throw it  
to him.



*“From where I stand now, i know those were my darkest days when I first got to Winnipeg, off the bus with enough money to hole up in a motel with my wife and our two boys. The wife had wanted to go on but I was spent, done with the journey and I wanted to begin making some kind of life for us, for me. I felt I could get a job in this town. I could be someone here. On the first day I found a job advertised in the local paper. I walked six miles in boots that were missing a heel and at various times on that walk I felt every emotion from fear, dread, hope, confidence, anger*

*at myself and the world and then love – for my boys. When I arrived the folks that interviewed me asked me how I had arrived at their place -- finally they understood that I had walked, walked without a heel on my boot -- and they then understood how much I wanted the job, chance, opportunity. They gave me the job and bus fare home and back again. At some point that first week my wife, the mother of our boys, left us. She was done with me... And that is the beginning of my story”*

The corner of Colony and Portage Avenue was once like any other street corner in Canada. When I got off the bus and stood there with a young family in tow and no prospects and no job with little money, at least I had no fear. Maybe that was my blessing; that I had no fear and nothing to fear. I'd heard about Winnipeg, barely, and only seen it once a couple of years before while hitchhiking from Calgary, although that was from a distance on the Perimeter Highway. Arriving as I did in its downtown 35 years ago it was still the older city in certain regards, and like many cities hadn't yet found a way to modernize and do away with some of the decay. But I dug it right away! It wasn't too big, not too small, like Sonny Boy Williamson once said in a strange vernacular, "Too small to be a village, an' too large enough to be a town."

So it was. Wild times and wild company in a town that seemed to welcome me, and one that I certainly welcomed. But inside, in my soul, in my heart, those were also dark times, but a darkness I had gotten used to by then, a darkness with just enough light to get back up for. I only like to go back to certain times and certain neighbourhoods in my mind there, to whatever good times there were. The bad times hurt and there were enough bad times to make it really hurt and while the struggle seemed insurmountable at the beginning I could feel deep down that something good had to happen, even while walking in my broken boots, for miles at a time, I could feel it! I had to feel it.

Winnipeg was a frontier town way back when with a hard edge to it, but overtime a warm heart developed in the collective. When I got there I could feel that, I could tell people were good in that town. In a relatively short time I learned my way around and got to know the right people to help me at least move in the right direction. Be it a ride, or a tip on a job, or a slight little hand up, there was just enough help to keep me there. And then one night out of nowhere while in the company of a few relatively new acquaintances, sitting around listening to the blues, a couple of them playing acoustic guitars, another playing some rudimentary harmonica, is when the latter threw me a harmonica and said "Here I have a back-up, check this out!" It was the best thing I'd ever had thrown to me, not at me!

I went away with that little 10-hole mystery, took a couple of tips my new found friend gave to me, and never let it go like it was a lifeline, a help line, a

1-800 number, a new found friend. Day in, day out, I would work that little thing, talk to it, get mad at it, look at it, and then I found myself thinking about it when we'd be apart. And the days would pass and the months too and I would work it, listening to Jimmy Reed and Little Walter and Rice Miller, and wonder how they were doing it. And then I began to reach out and follow the players, listening intently, watching carefully, and with all of that came a larger purpose, one of finding a song, reaching for what I thought was unreachable, touching it and holding it and eventually making it mine, finding a voice, a vehicle in which to find expression!

From the haze of a troubled mind all those years ago I've never let go of how that little instrument found me! I didn't find it, it found me! When it was thrown to me I couldn't have realized where it would take me, where it would urge me to go, and how it would help me. In life one person can make a difference and when my long ago friend made that difference I not only hung on to that but would eventually, some 12 years later, name my youngest son after him, so that the story will never have an end.

One person can change the story. One person's bravery can change the lives of those around them...for their kids, community, province, country... one person can change anything. A band member gives a harmonica to this man when he needed something, something to learn, to make, to care about. And so he learned to play and now he plays pretty well every day while he sings what he knows to be true.



**What do you have to share? Beyond money -- which is impersonal and often abused, though necessary... What skill, what artifact do you have to share that would change the life of another, save the life of another, and say, "i see you, and I care about you."**

**Why throw it at him, when you can throw it to him. He will surely share it forward.**



## Pruning, planting and establishing roots – actually and metaphorically

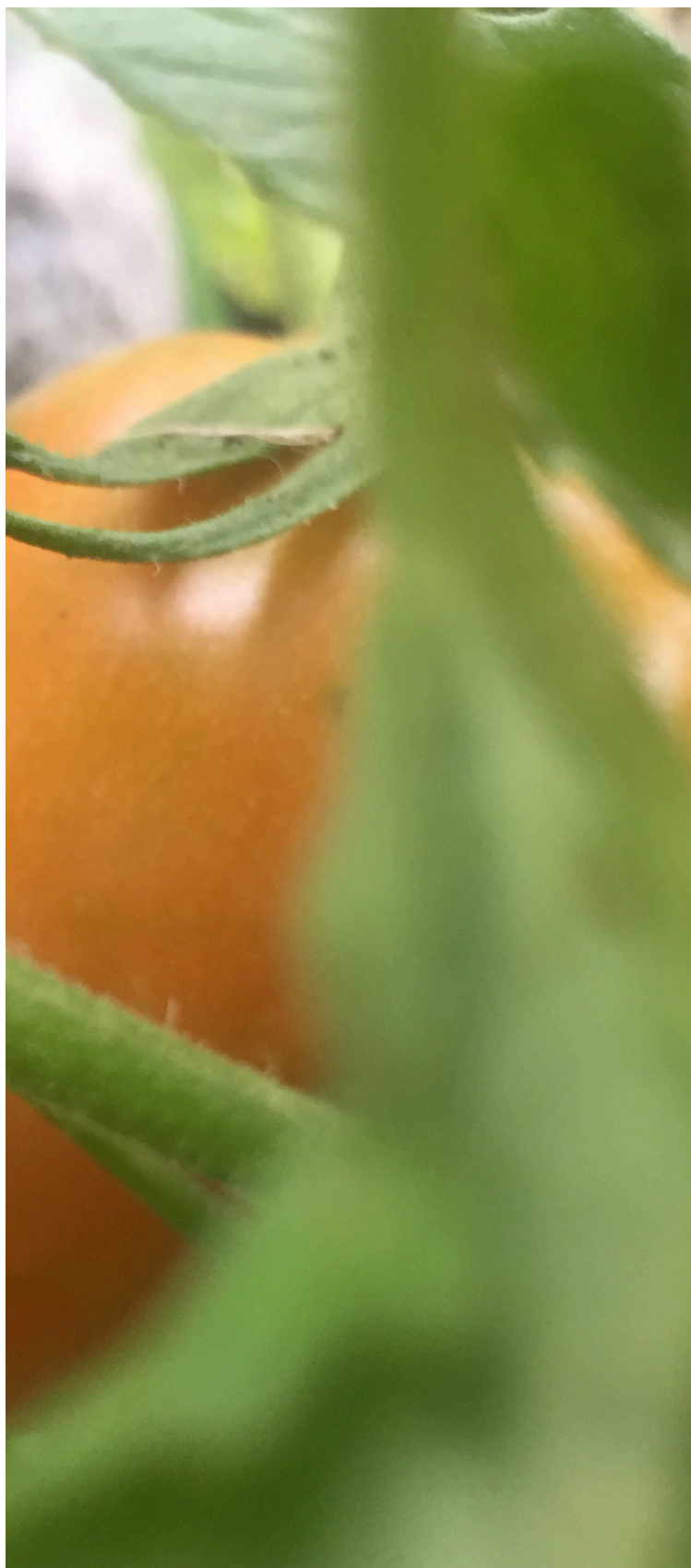
Flying from abroad and arriving at the train station in April when it was still cold and bare looking, I was sitting, thinking “What am I doing?” Waiting there at the station to be picked up, “What am I doing??” Volunteering on an organic farm with sustainable building projects – “What am I doing???”

When I started volunteering on your farm I had a vague idea that I wanted to learn something practical. At your place I found so many things that I had not realized I needed. My time here has allowed me to learn, explore and dream; to envision my future and see my knowledge and prospects expand exponentially. I loved every moment on this land...walking barefoot, seeing the lake every day. The dramatic skies felt so sacred. It was an honour to work in the garden in your beautiful soil. Being here helped me see parts of myself that I had tucked away and hidden. I am excited to discover these parts of myself for myself.

I tried my best to not let it show but I came here with some wounds which had accumulated over the years. I have healed so much while I was here, there seems to be an incredible healing and loving energy emanating from this place. I am a changed person from when I first arrived...a better person. I will incorporate this loving energy into my life. All the good I see happening from here to the local community and travelers from all over the world inspires me to push forward in life with a positive perspective.

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*Want to give yourself space to think and feel? Why not offer to work on a local farm, or engage with a farm in another country...Have you heard about WWOOFing (World Wide Opportunities on Organic Farms) -- an international movement linking volunteers with organic farmers and growers to promote cultural and educational experiences based on trust and [usually] non-monetary exchange, helping to build a sustainable, global community.*





If you want  
to be happy,  
make someone  
else happy.

# Seriously. Somebody Likes You.

It seems to me that the same people are the doers in this town. Over and over again, the same people show up, stand up, and get whatever it is, done. So much so that others feel they don't need to get involved.

How do we engage the young people of Port Hope in pursuits that will interest, challenge and reward them? How to solve the John Street dilemma of bad behaviour, how to look after our disenfranchised people regardless of the reason they feel or are alone... Imagine that Port Hope, more of the people of Port Hope, talked, self-organized and took on projects for the good of the community independent of governance. Instead of complaining... thinking up solutions.

Here is a thought as old as time: when you make something -- soup, cookies, applesauce... share it. Trade guitar lessons for a home cooked meal delivered once or twice a week. Share lawn care or snow shovelling for tickets to the theatre. And while we appreciate all the \$\$\$ put into the local coffers from the lakefront industries... let's try as a town to exist apart -- without money from industries we secretly [and not so secretly] wish would leave our otherwise lovely waterfront. Let's stand on our own two feet, let's put forward our best attributes: kindness, music, art, food, celebrations and let's begin to thrive on the merits of who we are, what we do and what we can share amongst ourselves and with visitors.

Let's create and agree on a manifesto for Port Hope that is entirely owned by those who live here, work here, love here...this could be a starting point:

Port Hope needs people exactly like you and me, to get involved, stay involved and involve others so that Port Hope is, above all, a town of people who take responsibility for ourselves and each other and who project everything that is cool about this town and our people -- to the rest of Ontario. And if you've always lived here, think about your favourite spot to be, your favourite time of day... all the reasons this is still home. Sing about it, blog about it, draw it, share it in some way... And, if you've recently moved here from Toronto or somewhere else -- this is not only where you now live on weekends or full-time, this is your new home and we are your neighbours and we could become your cookie, soup or applesauce suppliers if you'll allow us to know you.

Let's continue this exchange when we see each other on the streets of Port Hope. A nod and a knowing smile to begin with. A chat at the street light. A few words or more when we are sitting beside one another on the bench, at the bar, in the restaurant... I see you -- and like you already.

Sincerely, Me. [But i could be anyone.]

You have received a copy of SOMEBODY LIKES YOU because somebody does – like you – so when you are finished reading your copy please pass it along so more people know they are liked and so on and so on... Let's see if a very few copies can eventually be shared with everyone in this town. Why, just put it in someone elses mailbox - like i did for you.

