



I cannot imagine an Orangeville without Family Transition Place (FTP). It's as necessary for our community as any other service. That the services have changed is undisputed, but the values central to the core of FTP haven't changed at all. FTP provides safety, support and HOPE, building healthier communities – one relationship at a time.

The necessity of such a shelter for abused women and children became crystal clear when, as Mayor of Orangeville, I attended a funeral with five coffins at the altar (Helen Kirec and her four children murdered). It was a terrible tragedy and emphasized how fragile and vulnerable life can be. It reminded us to hope for the future and to give us the courage to face the unknowns of tomorrow. Our community was shattered but with resilience and love we moved forward.

This is a far cry from FTP's earliest beginnings in 1983 when five amazingly strong, determined women with vision, saw the need for and provided the action to bring about FTP's first shelter on Hillside Drive in 1985. This success was not without frustration, delays, outright skepticism and opposition. But, they were fearless and relentless.

I polled my daughter Aislinn—the ultimate feminist—for her thoughts on hope. She said, "Hope is active, not passive. Hope is believing that the actions one takes will make a difference." My son Allyn responded that for him, "In a seemingly dark, tumultuous, frightening world, hope is the belief that things will get better." My friend Molly said that, "Hope is envisioning

light beyond a dark horizon. Hope is sometimes just hanging on to each day knowing that you have friends for support." I would say that FTP is the epitome of these thoughts and actions.

Hope opens one up to collaborating to re-invent one's future. Despite bleakness and near despair, there are always people at FTP who care. The need to stay connected, trusting in the tangible expectation that one deserves happiness is so important.

For myself a quote from Teju Cole sums up my thoughts. "Hope is the kind of arm you extend into the darkness on the behalf of others...all the privilege that I have and what is working for me...how dare I be hopeless."

Finally, as Ruth Bader Ginsburg said, "Women belong in ALL places where decisions are being made." Start with FTP.

*Article submitted by Mary Rose. Mary was the only female Mayor of Orangeville, has worked actively in improving our community on many key projects throughout the years and currently sits on FTP's Board of Directors. She has advocated for FTP since day one.*