



Hope Is the Thing to Do Right Now

**Story by: Mickey Crothers, Clinical Psychologist in Private Practice and Professor
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Hope is three crumpled dollars you find in a coat pocket when you thought you were flat-broke... then giving those three crumpled dollars to somebody who needs them worse than you do.

Hope is that power surge of devotion when a tiny, brand new hand closes around your finger, and you realize in that moment that life will reach way out beyond any days you will see. And you realize the world will be tended skillfully and lovingly one day by the owner of that brand new, tiny hand.

Hope is a chameleon. It morphs. If hope in one form doesn't do the trick, it mysteriously transforms into a revised version of itself so it can rise to the occasion. Hope changes its clothes, reinvents itself as many times as it must, to get the job done.

Hope is working shoulder-to-shoulder with strangers-becoming-friends. It's the deep, coursing power of building together what we cannot build alone. Hope is a neighbor showing up to milk the cows when somebody's leg is broken. Hope is a barn-raising. Hope is a casserole.

Hope is straining the eye to look through the chinks in the headlines for the good news. It's about believing in things unseen, like the million small acts of generosity we'll never know about, because they won't be touted in the bold, black strokes of headlines. Hope is written quietly, by hand.

Hope is a prayer whispered through the darkness. It's the prayer you whisper for someone you love. It's the prayer you whisper for someone who hates you. It's the prayer you whisper for a stranger you will never meet. It's the prayer someone whispers for you.

Hope is starting to sing when the last thing on earth you feel like doing is singing. It feels artificial at first – dishonest. Your brain doesn't believe a word of it. But keep singing. The vibration of throat and chest set the air around you vibrating, and the song streams back in through your ears, and your skeptic brain has now forgotten who it was that did this singing in the first place, and grudgingly allows itself to be cheered. First thing you know, you won't really have to sing any more – the song will start singing itself. And every stringed instrument in the universe will start resonating – echoing hope.

Hope is a hand. The strong hand that pulls someone up when they're too exhausted to make the climb on their own. The hand that milked your cows when your leg was broken. The hand that raised the barn. The hand that made the casserole. When the hope of one is on the ebb, it's the gentle hand of another that reaches out and pulls it back. Hope is the unspoken language of a hand that touches the places words can't reach. Hope is the hand that promises it will never let go.

Hope is the thing to do right now.

Artist: Jane Mohler, Student and Local Artist
University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire

Buds Hoping for Blossom

Jane Mohler is a UW-Eau Claire student and local artist.

View all the pieces in the *Healing Reflections* [online gallery](#).