



HOPE 2022



Once a month, we set aside one of our regular community dinners to celebrate the milestones the women in the programs have achieved. For each milestone, women choose a special stone out of a basket as a symbol of what they have accomplished. The basket is full of beautiful, polished slices of geodes the size of a silver dollar. Over time, one of the women in our home collected dozens of these lovely chips representing the many milestones, big and small, she had achieved. She arranged them in a frame as a mosaic with a design of a winding path. For her, the path in the frame represented her healing journey – a symbol of how far she had come out of exploitation and how that journey was slowly built, stone by stone, with intention and purpose.

The memory of that mosaic has stuck with me. It's a beautiful representation of the daily work of healing and recovery. The journeys of healing we support at Amirah are long and arduous ones, full of milestones both big and small. They are journeys of not only exiting a life of exploitation, but of women building new lives for themselves. They are journeys of healing, trust-building, community, self-discovery, self-efficacy, and independence. And they are powered by hope.

Recently, a woman in our program said, "Hope is the reason to keep moving forward." A staff member shared this with me two days before I stepped into my new role at Amirah and it has been ringing in my ears ever since. This work is challenging and it can be dark, but hope truly is the reason why we keep moving forward. It is the reason why I believe in this work and the impact a community can have in the face of darkness. I have seen the power of hope - the resilience in a woman's eyes when she has chosen not to give up on herself, the small wins that remind us of the bigger picture, the way people who were told they were nothing more than a product step into the truth of their humanity.

When you give to Amirah, you are giving hope. You are powering forward movement – these journeys of healing – with the resources needed to make them possible.



Nancy Pate