



2023 Year in Review



Jennifer Lucking - Canada

A glimpse at what your support made possible:

Because of your support and generosity, Restorations provides a safe home to survivors of human trafficking and commercial sexual exploitation. In their journey of overcoming trauma, survivors need positive, long-term relationship-building and services. Because of your generosity, three survivors can live at Nancy's House for up to two years where they experience safety, support, care, and belonging. I am so honoured to be in a position where I get to witness firsthand the growth they make in their physical, emotional, mental, social, and spiritual health. Here's what some of those who live at Nancy's House have to say:

I love the women who run this house and the amazing support they give me on a daily basis. They literally have changed my life in a way I never could have on my own.

I'm actually sticking to goals and not saying things just because I feel that others want to hear it. I am actually taking time from my day to do schoolwork. I love that the staff have genuine care for us.

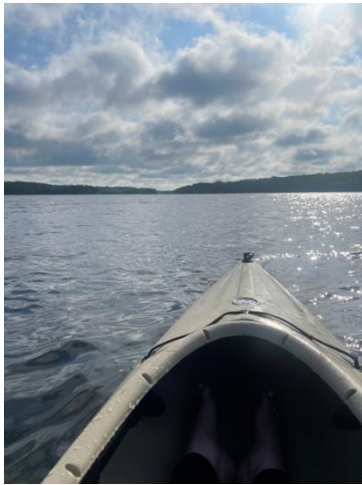
This house is such a blessing for women who have been trafficked and I am so blessed to have had the opportunity to be in this program.

Restorations exists to support survivors of sexual exploitation and trafficking by providing long-term residential housing, survivor-led peer programming, and holistic care. Over the last couple of years, our "survivor-led peer programming" has grown! What this means for me is that a core part of my role is hiring and mentoring survivors as they grow in their leadership skills and professional roles. Of our (small) team, 50 percent of our employees are individuals with lived experience of trafficking or exploitation. This is something that I never even dreamed of when Restorations was first started in 2013, but providing meaningful employment opportunities for survivors is now core to how Restorations operates and something I'm most proud of in our organizational growth!

Some of my favourite memories at Restorations this year include:

- Watching a survivor discover a love of gardening. She found it incredibly therapeutic and the activity also helped her bond with a family member. She grew some amazing herbs, vegetables, and flowers and transformed our gardens into something beautiful!
- Just spending time with residents at Nancy's House. We received a donated stand mixer, and I've shown residents how to bake bread. I still crave a simple chicken and bruschetta lunch we all made together last summer!

- Seeing survivors in our wider community find belonging and support through Peer Advocacy program activities. Some favourite activities this year included a self-defense workshop and our 2nd annual Peer Retreat.



Our challenges of 2023

One of the challenges we continue to face is the mere complexity of human trafficking and the trauma that survivors experience. Sometimes those who reach out to us have incredibly complex needs, especially if they are still being exploited. We are not able to house everyone who applies at Nancy's House, not just because we only have three bedrooms, but also because many of the applicants are facing challenges like substance misuse, complex mental health diagnoses, and developmental needs that require more support than we can provide.

While our team works hard with all applicants to find the best housing fit for them, options are limited due to current housing challenges. Seeing people in tremendous need and being in roles in which we are serving vulnerable people can have an incredible impact on staff. One of the challenges I've faced this past year is coaching my team through compassion fatigue to avoid burnout. Being realistic about our team's capacity to support survivors, a vulnerable population who has experienced complex trauma and horrific exploitation, has been an important part of leading Restorations' staff and volunteer teams.

One last challenge I want to leave behind in 2023: we fully welcome survivors into Nancy's House, but I do not need nor want any more mice, squirrels, or snakes in our home! (I'll refrain from providing a picture of the snake we discovered in our toilet...)

Please Pray

Please continue to hold us in your prayers, especially:

- For all those who have experienced human trafficking, that they experience hope and support.
- For survivors whom we support through our residential and peer advocacy programs.
- For the staff and volunteers of Restorations, that we live into our roles well and care for people deeply while also taking time to care for our own physical, mental, emotional, social, and spiritual health needs.
- For me (Jennifer) as I strive to lead with wisdom, empathy, and boldness.
- For our Board of Directors as we go through a strategic planning process to dream and grow into the coming years.