Any crisis is overwhelming—the result of something outside an individual’s control. But every crisis is also personal. Something that takes away choices, dreams and plans.

In Jordan, there is a deafening, deepening kind of crisis. War has ripped apart families in Syria, wrecking the lives of young people who were training to become the doctors, lawyers, teachers, nurses, bakers, electricians, farmers, and computer gurus of the future. Possibilities that seemed endless have met a stone wall, just as these young people were preparing for their futures. The Za’atari refugee camp in the north of Jordan is a sinkhole of the dreams, hopes, and ambitions of more than 100,000 Syrian refugees. Now, instead of doctors, electricians and farmers, they are refugees.

Questscope gives these young people a second chance at their dreams. We started an alternative education program for 200 youth inside Za’atari camp to continue their studies. We began matching more than 1,000 youth with mentors who support them in creating small projects that make big contributions to improving life in their temporary desert camp home. In urban areas of Jordan, Questscope also provided alternative education for 280 young people who would otherwise have had no place in their shattered world to learn, to belong, or to grow.

Inside Syria, our local partner, the Syrian Society of Social Development, reached out to more than 3,200 displaced individuals and families, providing shelter, supplies, and education.

In many places of crises, of darkness, Questscope is there. In early 2013, we met with a group of older youth in the Za’atari camp, all in their twenties, all living on the razor edge that divides anger and hopelessness. They wanted to go home. They didn’t think change was possible. They have grown used to the silence and empty promises that meet their questions.
We asked one of them, “If you fear change is not possible, why did you come to this meeting?”

With almost no emotion, 21-year-old Ali said, “I didn’t come because I have a lot of hope. I came because I have just a tiny bit left.”

**A big crisis for the region. Tiny crises for individuals. And a tiny bit of hope left.**

But not all crises are so far from home. In Minneapolis, there is a quiet, desperate kind of crisis. A growing number of American youth don’t believe they can make it in school. They just don’t have the support systems or community in place to unleash their potential. They need a listener, an advocate, a champion—someone who will be there to pay attention and accompany them on their journey.

Questscope believes each of those students can make it. Our U.S. program, One2One, just completed the first year of a pilot for school-based mentoring in Minneapolis, through which 31 junior high students have been intensively mentored by 29 trained mentors, using lessons gleaned from our mentoring program for disadvantaged youth in the Middle East.

**This is where Questscope belongs. We engage with youth and families in crisis, to build relationships in places of diminishing optimism, and to make a difference for those with just a tiny bit of hope left.**

It is a challenge. But putting the last first is our motivating force in the face of both human need and human resilience. Together, we can overcome the forces that are attempting to destroy lives and futures.

We appreciate you. And we appreciate your support so that we can be in the places, in the crises, where tiny hopes can grow.

Dr. Curt Rhodes,
Founder & International Director
March 2013
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