

# Calvary in Touch

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CALVARY HOSPITAL



Where Life Continues

## Greetings

A large part of the way we deal with the death of a loved one involves creating rituals to remember them. Rituals allow us to maintain a connection with our loved ones and can be a source of comfort for us. Private rituals are those that you do alone or with someone else. There are also the more public rituals, which are

those we can do as a community.

The focus of this issue is to recognize different types of rituals that may be helpful to us in our healing process. Rituals can be religious or they can be secular. They can be done once or twice, or they can be done continuously.

Our imagination needs no bounds and we can create meaningful rituals that will be helpful to ourselves and to our families. We hope that you take advantage of some of the rituals discussed here, and also create new ones.

Dr. Sherry R. Schachter,  
Director of Bereavement  
Services



## Ways to Remember

A large part of dealing with the death of a loved one involves creating rituals to remember. Remembering how a person touched our lives and keeping a connection with them can comfort those of us left behind to deal with all the emotions we have after the death of a loved one. There are times when a private ritual that you may do alone or with someone you trust seems right and necessary to your healing.

Private rituals help to remember your loved one in special ways that have some meaning to you or would have held special meaning for your loved one. People

have found comfort in creating a “sacred place” in the home that reflects the life of their loved one with pictures and special objects. This is a place where you may go to reflect on your feelings or just when you need to remember. This can be especially helpful for people who are not able to travel to the cemetery or for those whose loved ones were cremated and who have the urn in their home.

Some create this space in a bedroom or living room; one woman shared that she created it in her closet because it was too private and she didn’t want others

who came into her home to see it.

Wearing a piece of jewelry or clothing from the deceased is another way to remember them. Buying a locket that holds a picture inside is helpful in moments when you really need the comfort of seeing a loved one’s face.

Special days such as holidays, anniversaries, and birthdays can be terribly difficult to get through. There are many ways to acknowledge the day and do something to remember.

One woman decided to take a walk through the botanical gardens on her mother’s



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## Memorial Day

Death is not just a private happening, although it may feel that way to many people. The impact of a death is far reaching. It's a social experience that directly affects the dying person and the bereaved family as well as friends, acquaintances, and communities. The rituals surrounding death help us to work through our grief.

The public grief that followed the attacks on the World Trade Center created many examples of rituals. After 9/11 there were no prescribed rituals to help us mourn thousands of people. We invented these rituals to help us. With candles and some flowers people transformed ordinary sidewalks and street corners into sacred spaces. Here friends, family,

or a passerby could pause to pray, reflect on the tragedy, and leave whatever offerings they thought appropriate.

From the Egyptian pyramids to American naval ships, from ancient hand-hewn stones to modern bronze monuments, we honor our dead.

Memorials for our veterans can be seen throughout the country – not only in Washington DC. While many think that Memorial Day signifies the start of summer, it is actually a special holiday filled with many rituals, including visiting cemeteries and memorials.

- There is a national moment of remembrance that takes place at 3 PM. The flag of the United States is flown at half-staff from dawn until noon, local time.

- Volunteers and families often place American flags on each gravesite.
- Members of the Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) stand outside shopping centers and stores taking donations for poppies, one of the many symbols of Memorial Day. The poppy's significance to Memorial Day is the result of the poem, *In Flanders Fields*, written by John McCrae.

Many Americans also use Memorial Day as a time to honor other family members who have died. We hope that the rituals you create are meaningful for you and your family.

*“When someone you love becomes a memory, the memory becomes a treasure.”*  
Anonymous



## Ways to Remember (continued)

birthday because this was her favorite place to visit when she was alive. Another woman invited a friend to accompany her to Atlantic City on Mother's Day, because this is what she and her mother used to do every Mother's Day.

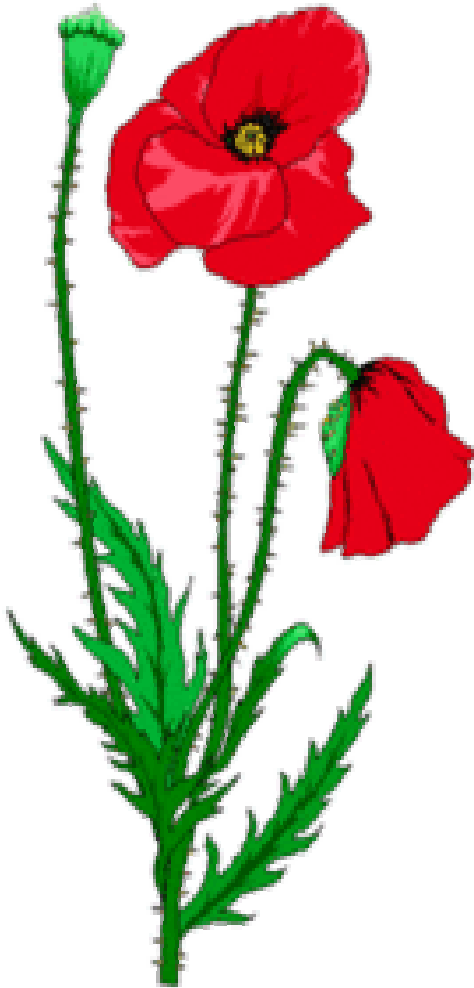
Lighting a candle for the person who died on a holiday or writing a card for them on their birthday can help you to express

yourself. Listening to their favorite song on a special day, cooking a meal you both loved, inviting over some family or friends to share memories about your loved one or doing a balloon release are all ways of remembering.

Rituals such as these may inspire your emotions to surface, but they also offer comfort and a way of keeping a connection with your loved one. The important thing to

remember is to listen to yourself and participate in rituals that may feel good to you, whether or not others may agree with the ways you have chosen to remember.

## *In Flanders Fields*



*I*n Flanders fields the poppies blow

Between the crosses, row on row,  
That mark our place; and in the sky  
The larks, still bravely singing, fly  
Scarce heard amid the guns below.

We are the Dead. Short days ago  
We lived, felt dawn, saw sunset glow,  
Loved and were loved, and now we lie  
In Flanders fields.

Take up our quarrel with the foe:  
To you from failing hands we throw  
The torch; be yours to hold it high.  
If ye break faith with us who die  
We shall not sleep,  
though poppies grow  
In Flanders fields.

*John McCrae*

## Monthly Calendar *(All groups are free and open to the community)*

- **Bronx Day Group for Parents Whose Adult Child Has Died (Sherry Schachter)**  
Every Monday from 11:00 AM - 12:30 PM.
- **Brooklyn Day Spouse Group (Karen Wilkow)**  
Every Monday from 2:00 PM - 3:30 PM.
- **Precious Moments (Bronx) (Maria Georgopoulos)**  
Group for children, ages 6-11 years, Monday afternoons. 4:00 PM - 5:30 PM
- **Brooklyn Evening Group for Adults Whose Parents Have Died (Karen Wilkow)**  
Every Monday from 5:30 PM - 7:00 PM.
- **Teen Bereavement (Bronx) (Maria Georgopoulos)**  
Group for teens ages 12-18 years, meets Monday evenings 6:00 PM - 7:00 PM. *\*New Group*
- **Bronx Spanish-Speaking General Bereavement Group (Yovani Santiago)**  
Every other Monday. Please contact Yovani at 718-518-2569.
- **Bronx Day Spouse Group (Evan Jeske)**  
Tuesdays from 1:00 PM - 2:30 PM.
- **Next Steps (Bronx) (Sherry Schachter)**  
Every other Tuesday from 1:00 PM - 2:30 PM.
- **Bronx Young Spouse Group (Evan Jeske)**  
Every Tuesday from 5:30 PM - 7:00 PM.
- **Bronx Evening Group for Adults Whose Parents Have Died (Maria Georgopoulos)**  
Every Tuesday from 5:30 PM - 7:00 PM.
- **Teen Bereavement (Bronx) (Maria Georgopoulos)**  
Group for teens ages 12-18 years, meets Wednesday afternoons. 4:00 PM - 5:30 PM
- **Bronx Evening Group for Bereaved Adult Siblings (Evan Jeske)**  
Every Wednesday from 6:15 PM - 7:45 PM. *\*New group*
- **Monthly Christian Memorial Service**  
Bronx--Saturday, May 9 2:30 PM - 4:00 PM  
Saturday, June 13 2:30 PM - 4:00 PM  
Brooklyn  
Sunday, June 7 2:00 PM - 3:30 PM
- **Jewish Memorial Services**  
Bronx--Sunday, June 7 9:30 AM - 11:00 AM  
Brooklyn--Sunday, May 3 10:00 AM - 11:00 AM
- **Friday Matinee (Bronx)**  
Friday, May 8 1:00 PM - 3:00 PM  
  
*"Sleepless in Seattle"*  
This romantic comedy stars Tom Hanks (Sam) as a recent widower in Seattle who lives with his young son Jonah. When

Jonah calls in to a national radio show on Christmas Eve to find his dad a new wife, hundreds of women respond to his heart-rending tale. One listener is an unhappy engaged woman in NY played by Meg Ryan, who decides to write to him. As the movie unfolds, they try to sort out their feelings and discover if it can truly be love at such a distance.

- **Friday Matinee (Bronx)**  
Friday, June 12 1:00 PM - 3:00 PM

### **"Shadowlands"**

A divorced New York Woman (Debra Winger) and well-known children's author CS Lewis (Anthony Hopkins) become romantically entwined in this story about their ill-fated May-December love affair. The story is based on Lewis' real life.

## Key Contacts in Calvary's Bereavement Department

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