

# Calvary in Touch

## Greetings

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I wanted to introduce myself as the new Director of Bereavement Services. I have had an interest in death's impact on us as human beings for as far back as I can remember. Then, at 14, my mother was diagnosed with breast cancer. As a teenager it was very difficult to focus on both my own development and my mother's decline. Her death shook every aspect of my life as a young adult, with limited resources available in the community back then to help.

Throughout my life I have followed my passion to help people heal. I completed my undergraduate studies at St. John's University and my graduate degree at New York University. I went on to obtain my Fellowship Certification with ADEC, the Association for Death Education and Counseling. ADEC is a wonderful professional community of individuals who are deeply invested in the advancement of end of life and bereavement care.

My history with Calvary has very personal roots, as often happens with employees of our Calvary family.

My recent promotion to Director of Bereavement Services feels like a natural progression for me. I embody Calvary's mission of compassion and non-abandonment because I know what it's like to walk around with the heavy burden of grief and I don't want anyone else to have to walk it alone.

Aside from my internship and work as a Bereavement Counselor at Calvary, I have extensive experience working in the mental health field. I have directed a mental health program for severely mentally ill adults, worked with the American Red Cross assisting families after 9/11, have had several case manager positions, taught as an adjunct professor and have my own private practice. I am honored to continue the work of expanding our bereavement services here at Calvary Hospital.

*Maria Georgopoulos, LMHC, FT  
Director of Bereavement Services*

## *Spotlight On: One Member's Perspective*

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“It was a long, difficult path from illness to grief. I knew intellectually that there would be an overwhelming amount of emotion when my spouse died, but it was always a problem for later. When this caretaker lost his person to take care of there was an incredibly acute feeling of sadness along with every other emotion you can imagine; joy that this person I loved wasn't suffering anymore, guilt that I wasn't able to do more, worry for all of the arrangements that hadn't been made - and so many other things that I couldn't begin to name without a translator.

It still doesn't feel real. The acute despair is gone for the most part, leaving me with this ever-shifting, low grade sorrow that permeates most things I do. It flares back up to full strength at the oddest moments, but I welcome that strong feeling again. The weight of my connection to my spouse made it seem very natural to want to be with them no matter where they were in those first months. Thanks to the support that my son and I have gotten, I was able to realize that I want to be with my wife - but not yet.

Hearing someone that I trust tell me my feelings are normal has been such a relief. It's given me the courage to be more honest with my son and lead the way to an amazing group of people.

Talking about my grief steals its power. Not in a bad way, for me. Talking to Brittany gives me reassurance and strength. Helps me create a new “normal” for my son and I. Creates a sense that others have been where I am now. And even as I questioned my sanity and overwhelmed myself with worry, I was able to honor my spouse by allowing that support into my home and into my life.

I didn't “lose” my spouse. I know exactly where my partner is. But I also know that this “process” seems far too messy for such a technical word. “Process” makes it sound like this should have a manual, and I haven't found one yet - if it exists. But I have found like-minded people in group, and they can guide me along until I can find my way.”

*Anonymous Group Member*

## *Spotlight On: Spring's Upon Us*

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To many individuals the start of the Spring season brings hope of new beginnings. As the colder weather decreases and the light of day increases many often get an extra pep in their step. This mirrors the newness and freshness that is reflected in nature itself. Leaves are growing back on trees, flowers bloom, and animals end their hibernation.

For many grievors however, the onset of Spring may bring about different feelings. Grievors may be absent of sentiments of new beginnings as they struggle with moving forward without their loved ones. Spring also brings about special days that hold meaning for many

families and friendship groups. Holidays like Passover, Easter, Mother's and Father's days often highlight the absence of loved ones who have died.

It's ok to acknowledge that feelings of happiness may not pervade and it's also ok to move at your own pace. Take time to self-care as each new day comes. This may mean a quiet moment alone, a long walk, or time spent with those who can make you laugh or serve as listening ears. Even as the world seemingly changes around you, the memories you cherish with loved ones remain constant. Let that serve as a comfort and an anchor.

*Rashida Sanchez, MA, FT*

# Monthly Calendar

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## BRONX GROUPS

Adult Death of a Child  
Wednesday: Joanne  
1:00 pm - 2:30 pm  
Every other Thursday: Sherry  
12:30 pm - 2:00 pm

Adult Death of a Parent  
Wednesday: Stephanie  
6:00 pm - 7:30 pm  
Thursday: Joanne  
5:30 pm - 7:00 pm

Death of a Sibling  
Tuesday: Joanne  
5:30 pm - 7:00 pm

Death of a Spouse/Partner  
Tuesday: Joanne  
1:00 pm - 2:30 pm  
Tuesday: Andrew  
5:30 pm - 7:00 pm  
Thursday: Amy  
7:00 pm - 8:30 pm

Death of a Young Spouse/Partner  
Wednesday: Joanne  
5:30 pm - 7:00 pm

Spanish Speaking Group  
Monday: Yvette  
12:30 pm - 2:00 pm

Young Adult Group  
Monday: Devon  
6:30 pm - 8:00 pm

Precious Moments Ages 6 - 9  
4:30 pm - 6:00 pm

In Be-tween Ages 10 - 12  
6:15 pm - 7:45 pm  
Monday: Devon

Teen Group Ages 13 - 17  
Tuesday: Devon  
4:45 pm - 6:15 pm

Death of a Sibling  
Tuesday: Joanne  
5:30 pm - 7:00 pm

## BRONX GROUPS (Cont.)

Men's Discussion Group  
Every other Thursday: Sherry  
12:30 pm - 2:00 pm

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Calvary Hospital  
1740 Eastchester Road  
Bronx, NY 10461

## BROOKLYN GROUPS

Precious Moments Ages 6 - 9  
Tuesday: Rashida  
4:00 p.m. - 5:30 pm

In Be-tween Group Ages 10 - 12  
Thursday: Lily  
4:00 pm - 5:30 pm

Death of a Spouse/Partner  
Thursday: Rashida  
5:00 pm - 6:30 pm

Death of a Young Spouse/Partner  
Monday: Lily  
6:00 pm - 7:30 pm

Adult Death of a Parent  
Tuesday: Rashida  
6:00 pm - 7:30 pm

Death of a Child  
Monday: Rashida  
5:30 pm - 7:00 pm  
Thursday: Lily  
6:00 pm - 7:30 pm

Teen Group Ages 13 - 17  
Wednesday: Rashida  
4:00 pm - 5:30 pm

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St. Joseph High School  
80 Willoughby Street  
Brooklyn, NY 11201

## MANHATTAN GROUPS

Precious Moments  
for Children 6-11  
Tuesday: Brittany  
4:00 pm - 5:30 pm

Adult Death of a Parent  
Wednesday: Brittany  
5:30 pm - 6:45 pm

Death of a Spouse/Partner  
Wednesday: Brittany  
7:00 pm - 8:15 pm  
Thursday: Brittany  
6:00 pm - 7:30 pm

Teen Group Ages 12-17  
Thursday: Brittany  
4:00 pm - 5:30 pm

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St. Jean Baptiste High School  
173 East 75th Street  
New York, NY 10021

## MEMORIAL SERVICES

Bronx Christian  
March 10  
April 14

Bronx Jewish  
March 4

Brooklyn Christian  
April 15

Brooklyn Jewish  
April 22

Manhattan Non-Denominational  
TBA in the next issue

*All groups are free & open to the community. Please call to schedule an appointment*

## Contacts

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## Tree of Life

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Through the Tree of Life, we can recognize your significant naming gift in a permanent and meaningful manner. Your loved one's name will exist in perpetuity with the lifetime of the Hospital.

This a loving way of memorializing someone special to you or saying thank you, because your gift of love helps patients and families today and for many years to come.

For more information on the Tree of Life, contact Sandrina Fernandez at **718-518-2039**.

*[Calvary In Touch has been made possible by a generous bequest from Michael Camara](#)*