

# Motherless Daughters Community Calls

## *Session 1 (April 2 or 4)*

### WELCOME SESSION AND STORY SHARING

We meet new members and get to know them and their stories. There will be opportunities to find other women with histories similar to yours, and to offer and receive support from fellow group members.

## *Session 2 (April 9 or 11)*

### LATER LOSSES AND REACTIVATED GRIEF

Any type of loss in the present has the ability to reactivate old grief from the past. In Week Two, we'll discuss why, how, and when this is likely to occur, and share tips for coping when it does. We'll also explore how experiencing an early loss creates a template for how we deal with later losses, and how that template can be changed.

*Tuesday: Affinity breakout room for motherless daughters who have experienced a recent loss of any kind.*

## *Session 3 (April 16 or 18)*

### TIPS, TOOLS AND THERAPIES WEEK WITH ZANNE AND CHRISTINE

MDCC co-facilitators Zanne Hollingshead (Tuesday) and Christine Meyer (Thursday) talk with [Sherry Walling, Ph.D.](#), a clinical psychologist, author, Tedx speaker, podcaster, mental health advocate, and circus lover. Her life's work is helping high-achieving people navigate painful and complex experiences. Through this work, she explores movement as a salve for grief. Sherry wrote her memoir, [Touching Two Worlds](#), to navigate her personal grief following the deaths of her father and brother, who passed away within six months. She'll share her strategies for finding wholeness in the aftermath of loss with us.

## *Session 4 (April 23 or 25)*

### WHAT IS COMPLEX PTSD?

C-PTSD is a relatively new term in psychology. Unlike PTSD, which is the nervous system's response to a traumatic, one-time event, C-PTSD is the outcome of accumulated stress over time. It's closely linked to Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) and shows up in predictable ways during adulthood. We'll discuss its most common symptoms and explore the strong relationship between early parent loss and C-PTSD.

*Tuesday: Affinity breakout room for motherless daughters whose mothers died from long-term illnesses.*

*PLEASE NOTE: There are no calls the week of April 30 and May 2.*

# Motherless Daughters Community Calls

## *Session 1 (March 5 or 7)*

### WELCOME SESSION AND STORY SHARING

We meet new members and get to know them and their stories. There will be opportunities to find other women with histories similar to yours, and to offer and receive support from fellow group members.

## *Session 2 (March 12 or 14)*

### RECLAIMING OUR SPIDEY SENSE

When self-doubt gets in the way of intuition, we become disconnected from our innermost selves. What causes this breach? How can we mend it? And how do we learn how to distinguish between true intuition, mistrust, and fear?

Tuesday: Affinity breakout room for motherless daughters who were 12 and under when their mothers died.

## *Session 3 (March 19 or 21)*

### TIPS, TOOLS AND THERAPIES WEEK WITH ZANNE AND CHRISTINE

MDCC co-facilitators Zanne Hollingshead (Tuesday) and Christine Meyer (Thursday) interview Sundari Malcolm. Sundari is the BIPOC Grief Educator and Care Curator for [The Dinner Party](#). At 27, she lost her mother to breast cancer, after seven years of being her caregiver. Four years later, her father died of brain cancer.

Propelled by these experiences, Sundari has dedicated her life to supporting caregivers and all individuals managing life after loss. A yoga and meditation teacher, Sundari is founder of [A Healing Doula](#), a multi-platform initiative offering birth, death, and grief doula services. She is also the author of [Grief Gems](#), a book that offers journal prompts and action steps to help readers navigate loss.

## *Session 4 (March 26 or 28)*

### GRIEF AND ANGER

In some circumstances, anger can feel energizing and empowering. In others, it can become corrosive and harmful to ourselves or others. Anger can also be a cover-up emotion, an easy go-to reaction that protects us from feeling deep sadness or fear. When is anger a useful response in grief, when is it a benign defense mechanism, and when is it merely reactive? We'll discuss how the nervous system responds to triggers and hear stories about anger's good, bad, and ugly sides.

Tuesday: Affinity breakout room for motherless daughters who are childless by circumstance or choice.

# Motherless Daughters Community Calls

## *Session 1 (February 6 or 8)*

### WELCOME SESSION AND STORY SHARING.

We meet new members and get to know them and their stories. There will be opportunities to find other women with histories similar to yours, and to offer and receive support to and from fellow group members.

## *Session 2 (February 13 or 15)*

### SELF-MEDICATING.

We'll have an honest, real conversation about attempts to self-regulate through alcohol, drugs, food, sex, shopping, or whatever helps us get through hard times. Stories will be shared as we support each other in finding and relying on more adaptive tools for coping.

Tuesday: Affinity breakout room for women who were 12 and under when their mothers died.

## *Session 3 (February 20 or 22)*

### TIPS, TOOLS, AND THERAPIES WEEK WITH ZANNE AND CHRISTINE.

MDCC co-facilitators Zanne Hollingshead (Tuesday) and Christine Meyer (Thursday) welcome guest Kate Spencer, the co-host of the award-winning podcast *Forever35* and author of the memoir The Dead Moms Club.

In a New York Minute is her first novel. Kate will join us to talk about losing her mom at age 27, using humor to navigate grief, and facing her health anxieties head-on.

## *Session 4 (February 27 or 29)*

### GRIEF AND THE BODY.

The body can hold on to emotions that the mind has yet to process. Where does grief show up in your body? What has helped you physically process it? And what has your experience with the medical profession been like around this issue?

Tuesday: Affinity breakout room for women who lost mothers to long-term illnesses.

# Motherless Daughters Community Calls

## *Session 1 (January 2 or 4)*

### WELCOME SESSION AND STORY SHARING.

We meet new members and get to know them and their stories. There will be opportunities to find other women with histories similar to yours, and to offer and receive support to and from fellow group members.

## *Session 2 (January 9 or 11)*

### EMOTIONAL REGULATION, DYSREGULATION, SELF-REGULATION AND CO-REGULATION.

What do these terms mean, and why are they important? Join us in Week Two for a dash of neuroscience, as share tips for bringing our nervous systems back to a comfortable baseline.

Tuesday: Affinity breakout rooms for motherless daughters who were 12 and under when their mothers died.

## *Session 3 (January 16 or 18)*

### TIPS, TOOLS AND THERAPIES WEEK.

MDCC co-facilitators Zanne Hollingshead (Tuesday) and Christine Meyer (Thursday) welcome guest [Alica Forneret](#). Alica (she/her) is an educator, speaker, consultant and the Founder and Executive Director of [PAUSE](#). Join us as we talk about turning loss into meaning and supporting Communities of Color through grief and end of life.

## *Session 4 (January 23 or 25)*

### THE MYSTERIOUS ART OF ADULTING.

“I feel like a big kid in an adult body.” It’s a statement that many of us are familiar with. But what does it really mean? When our emotional development was disrupted, when responsibility was thrust upon us rather than growing gradually, we can wind up feeling like we’re not ready for tasks our peers seem to sail through without effort. In Week Four we’ll get honest and real about what it’s like to not feel like an adult, even as we go through the motions of being one.

Tuesday: Affinity breakout room for motherless daughters who were teenagers when their mothers died.



# Motherless Daughters Community Calls

## *Session 1 (December 5 or 7)*

### WELCOME SESSION AND STORY SHARING.

We meet new members and get to know them and their stories. There will be opportunities to find other women with histories similar to yours, and to offer and receive support to and from fellow group members.

## *Session 2 (December 12 or 14)*

### HOLIDAY IDEA SWAP.

What's coming up for you this holiday season? If you're missing your mom, how can you make her absence more of a presence? Let's share ideas about how to incorporate our moms (and other loved ones) into the holidays this year and, by doing so, strengthen our inner relationships with them.

Tuesday: Affinity breakout rooms for motherless daughters who are childless by circumstance or choice.

## *Session 3 (December 19 or 21)*

### TIPS, TOOLS AND THERAPIES WEEK WITH ZANNE AND CHRISTINE.

MDCC co-facilitators Zanne Hollingshead (Tuesday) and Christine Meyer (Thursday) interview Sundari Malcolm. Sundari is the BIPOC Grief Educator and Care Curator for [The Dinner Party](#). At 27, she lost her mother to breast cancer, after seven years being her caregiver. Four years later, her father died of brain cancer. Propelled by these experiences, Sundari has dedicated her life to supporting caregivers and all individuals managing life after loss. A yoga and meditation teacher, Sundari is founder of [A Healing Doula](#), a multi-platform initiative offering birth, death, and grief doula services. She is also the author of [Grief Gems](#), a book that offers journal prompts and action steps to help readers navigate loss.

## *Session 4 (December 26 or 28)*

### HOME (OR NO HOME) FOR THE HOLIDAYS.

At a time of year when everyone else seems occupied with family gatherings, how do those of us without a home base – or with one that doesn't feel welcoming – manage? Whether you're surrounded by family or have been navigating the season alone, join us for a discussion about how to create a meaningful and personal sense of "home" at any time of year.

Tuesday: Affinity breakout room for motherless daughters who are only children.

# Motherless Daughters Community Calls

## *Session 1 (October 31 or November 2)*

### WELCOME SESSION AND STORY SHARING.

We meet new members and get to know them and their stories. There will be opportunities to find other women with histories similar to yours, and to offer and receive support to and from fellow group members.

## *Session 2 (November 7 or 9)*

### FOCUS ON: MOTHER LOSS AND ABSENCE DURING ADULTHOOD.

We continue our series of Focus On: weeks with a deep dive into mother loss and absence after age 30. Hope will share research on how losing a mom at this age affects daughters in the years that follow, and we'll hear from women in the community who've had this experience. We'll also discuss how a mother's absence after age 30 is profound for distinct reasons.

Tuesday and Thursday: Affinity breakout rooms for women who were 30+ when their mothers died

## *Session 3 (November 14 or 16)*

### TIPS, TOOLS AND THERAPIES WEEK WITH ZANNE AND CHRISTINE.

Special Guest: Brennan Wood, Executive Director of The Dougy Center: The National Grief Center for Children & Families in Portland, Oregon. Brennan was 12 years old when her mother died and soon after joined a Dougy Center peer support group. 36 years later, she leads the entire operation. Brennan will talk with us about her commitment and efforts to make the world into a place where grief is acknowledged as a natural response to loss. This is a week you won't want to miss.

We'll be taking Thanksgiving week off, and returning for...

## *Session 4 (November 28 or 30)*

### HOW TO COPE WITH THE UNFAIRNESS.

When we lose a mom we grieve for what we lost as daughters. We also grieve for what our moms lost by dying too soon. Both can feel unjust. How can and do we come to terms with this? We may not find answers in this session, but we'll ask the big questions together.

Tuesday: Affinity breakout room for daughters who lost mothers to forms of sudden death.

# Motherless Daughters Community Calls

## *Session 1 (September 5 or 7)*

### WELCOME SESSION AND STORY SHARING.

We meet new members and get to know them and their stories. There will be opportunities to find other women with histories similar to yours, and to offer and receive support to and from fellow group members.

## *Session 2 (September 12 or 14)*

### FOCUS ON: LOSS DURING THE TEEN YEARS.

We continue our Focus On: Weeks with a deep dive into mother loss between ages 13 to 19. Hope will share research on how losing a mom at this age affects daughters, and we'll hear from women in the community who've had this experience.

Tuesday: Affinity breakout room for women who were in their teens (13-19) when their mothers died

## *Session 3 (September 19 or 21)*

### TIPS, TOOLS AND THERAPIES – AUTHOR & THERAPIST DONALYN ALLEN

Donalyn Allen, a survivor of suicide loss and early parental loss, is a speech-language pathologist and a committed advocate for mental health. She found journaling as a practice of self-expression throughout life challenges and was inspired to create journals of her own. Join us to learn more about how journaling can help anyone heal.

## *Session 4 (September 26 or 28)*

### CONNECTION & RECONNECTION WITH OUR MOMS, STRENGTHENING THE INNER RELATIONSHIP

After a mother dies, staying connected to her means something different and new. Join us in Week Four as we explore Continuing Bonds and share methods that help us feel close to our moms and carry them forward.

Tuesday: Affinity Breakout Room for Motherless Daughters who are Childless By Circumstance or Choice



# Motherless Daughters Community Calls

## *Session 1 (August 1 or 3)*

### WELCOME SESSION AND STORY SHARING.

We meet new members and get to know them and their stories. There will be opportunities to find other women with histories similar to yours, and to offer and receive support to and from fellow group members.

## *Session 2 (August 8 or 10)*

### HYPERVIGILANCE.

Why are we so intent on keeping ourselves and others safe? How does this extreme need for security play out in our interpersonal relationships? We'll explore the connection between parent loss, health anxiety, and perceived vulnerability, and learn how to find serenity in a world that often feels out of control.

Tuesday: Affinity breakout room for motherless daughters who are facing or have faced a personal major health event or diagnosis.

## *Session 3 (August 15 or 17)*

### FOCUS ON: CHILDHOOD LOSS (12 AND UNDER)

We launch our new **Focus On:** Weeks with a deep dive into mother loss before age 12. Hope will share research on how losing a mom at this age affects daughters, and we'll hear from women in the community who've had this experience.

Tuesday: Affinity breakout room for women who were 12 and under when their mothers died.

## *Session 4 (August 22 or 24)*

### TIPS, TOOLS AND THERAPIES – GUEST: KATY VERNON

Born and raised in London and now a resident of Minneapolis, Katy was 12 when her mum died and 17 when she lost her dad. In the years that followed, she found that songwriting and performing helped her process grief and connect with others. Katy will talk with us about self-expression through music and the intersections between grief, substance abuse, and mental health.



# Motherless Daughters Community Calls

## *Session 1 (July 4 or 6)*

### **WELCOME SESSION AND STORY SHARING.**

We meet new members and get to know them and their stories. There will be opportunities to find other women with histories similar to yours, and to offer and receive support to and from fellow group members.

## *Session 2 (July 11 or 13)*

### **RELATIONAL TRAUMA.**

The disruption of an early relationship can cause what's known as a relational trauma. Our ability to attach to others and trust they'll a) stick around and b) meet our emotional needs can become impaired. This can result in anxious attachments, separation anxiety, and relational avoidance in adulthood. The effects can be generational, too. This is one of the most important topics we'll discuss this year!

Tuesday: Affinity breakout room for Motherless Mothers

## *Session 3 (July 18 or 20)*

### **TIPS, TOOLS, & THERAPIES — GUEST SPEAKER: ABBY O'LEARY.**

Abby is the **founder** of Fare Well Associates. When Abby's father died only a month after diagnosis in 2021, she came face-to-face with the bureaucracy of death and the gaps in support available to families. In response, she founded Fare Well Associates to help others prepare for and tackle the logistical challenges on the other side of loss. Abby joins us in Week Three to share her story and offer tips for how to balance the administrative aspects after a death with the essential tasks of mourning.

## *Session 4 (July 25 or 27)*

### **SILENCE BREAKING.**

What does it mean to break the silence in a family around grief or around a mother's death or life? Sometimes it opens a necessary and healing conversation. But sometimes the silence breaker is ostracized or dismissed. We'll take a deep dive into family dynamics and cultures to explore different possible outcomes. We'll also discuss why abandoning silence can be emotionally, mentally, and physically beneficial for the one who breaks it.

Tuesday: Affinity breakout room for Motherless Daughters of Color

# Motherless Daughters Community Calls in June



## *Session 1 (June 6 or 8)*

### WELCOME SESSION AND STORY SHARING.

We meet new members and get to know them and their stories. There will be opportunities to find other women with histories similar to yours, and to offer and receive support to and from fellow group members.

## *Session 2 (June 13 or 15)*

### FATHER'S DAY PREP/PEP CALL.

We talk about our moms a lot on the MDCCs. But our fathers played important roles, too. Some of us may be honoring our dads on Father's Day, and others may feel mixed or avoidant about it all. We'll assess where everyone is with the holiday, and share stories and tips for the weekend.

**Tuesday: Affinity breakout room for motherless daughters who have lost both parents.**

## *Session 3 (June 20 or 22)*

### TIPS, TOOLS, & THERAPIES — GUEST SPEAKER: MEGAN SHELDON.

Megan Sheldon is a Cultural Mythologist, Lifecycle Celebrant, End of Life Doula and co-founder of Be Ceremonial, the world's first DIY ceremony app. Megan will talk about rekindling our relationship with ritual, especially around grief, loss, and legacy.

## *Session 4 (June 27 or 29)*

### Overcompensating.

People-pleasing, overextending ourselves, and generally “overdoing” it are all coping strategies that may develop after a mother dies. In what ways do we overcompensate for affection, attention, or admiration as women, mothers, partners, daughters, and employees or employers? What are the benefits and costs to us? And how can we re-calibrate our efforts to feel energized by our efforts instead of depleted?

**Tuesday: Affinity breakout room for daughters who were 12 and under when their mothers died.**