



**Joanne L. Harpel, MPhil, JD, President of Coping After Suicide, LLC**, is an international authority on suicide bereavement and postvention response, with 20+ years of experience addressing the questions, emotions, and fears that arise in the aftermath of suicide.

She regularly works with faith leaders on a wide range of community, congregational, and youth programming, as well as sermons, eulogies, memorial services, and crisis support. She has extensive experience training clergy, chaplains, and spiritual care providers, including for the National Chaplain Training Center of the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, the U.S. Army Chaplain Center and School, the HealthCare Chaplaincy Network, and the Central Conference of American Rabbis. She is the co-creator of “What Clergy Need to Know About Mental Illness,” the nation’s first-ever program to educate clergy on the neuroscience underlying mental illness, piloted through a grant from UJA-Federation of New York.

A former attorney and the survivor of her brother's suicide, Joanne co-chairs the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline’s Lived Experience Committee and was a founding co-lead of SAMHSA's National Survivors of Suicide Loss Task Force, whose work culminated in the creation of national guidelines on responding to grief, trauma, and distress after a suicide. A Professional Career Suicidologist with the American Association of Suicidology, she is the recipient of their Survivor of the Year Award and is a member of their Survivors of Suicide Loss Task Force and Workplace Committee. She is also a member of the Association for Death Education and Counseling and National Alliance for Grieving Children.

Joanne is a seasoned guest lecturer, including at the United Nations, on Capitol Hill, and for the American Psychiatric Association, American Academy of Child & Adolescent Psychiatry, International Association for Suicide Prevention, and Bereaved Parents of the USA. She's trained the chaplains of the U.S. Army and Veterans Administration, the psychologists affiliated with the South Korea National Police Agency, the crisis response team of a large public university, and the psychiatry and social work departments of major medical centers. She has been a featured speaker for the New York State School Boards and Funeral Directors Associations, and has collaborated with hundreds of organizations, including the NIMH, WHO, Columbia University Schools of Social Work and Journalism, the University of Melbourne, HBO, and Sesame Street.

Joanne is the former longtime Senior Director for Public Affairs and Postvention for the world's largest nonprofit dedicated to the issue (the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention) where she created the most well-respected, far-reaching array of programs and resources in the field, including International Survivors of Suicide Loss Day (which now takes place annually in 300 cities on 6 continents); a toolkit utilized by schools across the country facing real-time crises; a primer explaining suicide to children; and national support group facilitator and outreach training programs attended by thousands of individuals across the country over two decades.

A cum laude graduate of Amherst College, she also holds graduate degrees from Cambridge University and the New York University School of Law. She lost her younger brother, Stephen, to suicide in 1993.

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