



You Can Thrive!  
FOUNDATION



**InnerThrive!**

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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## Who We Are

You Can Thrive! (YCT) was founded in New York City in 2005 with the Mission of ensuring that cancer survivors have the holistic resources for the best possible outcomes regardless of income, and providing these therapies in a place where community, trust and support flourishes. Our programs are far-sighted and innovative and were developed from an insider's perspective.

The initial services offered by YCT were advocacy and patient navigation; as the idea gained a foothold within the community, donations of space, professional volunteers and other resources have allowed us to increase our program offerings.

Since 2007 YCT has facilitated free and low cost integrative services to breast cancer survivors throughout the five boroughs of New York City. YCT's programs focus on ethnic and income disparate communities, who tend to have less favorable outcomes due to later stage at diagnosis, less access to medical care, and poorer health overall.

Each person who comes through our program gains free access to a multi-disciplinary program in order to facilitate and support better outcomes. Our replicable model includes:

- *Patient Navigation services to guide those diagnosed through medical and integrative landscape*
- *Therapies such as Acupuncture, Massage, Reiki, Tapping, Aromatherapy and other services*
- *Nutritional counseling with a private counselor addressing their specific needs*
- *Exercise and meditation access, training and lifestyle support*
- *Community holistic seminars and events designed to support implementation of these practices*

## Mission & Vision Statement

The mission of You Can Thrive! (YCT) is to connect people diagnosed with breast cancer to free and low-cost integrative support services and long term survivorship tools that afford them an optimal quality of life. With the vision of long-term widespread impact on the most critical gap in the cancer community: prevention and quality of life.

**"Compassion is a feeling deep in the heart that you cannot bear someone else's suffering without taking steps to relieve it."** *Dalai Lama*

You Can Thrives' integrative patient navigators, therapists, educators and outreach workers operate synergistically to give cancer survivors across the New York City area an opportunity to not only survive an often terminal diagnosis, but to flourish in its aftermath. Facilitated by volunteers our programs provide high value through in kind donations. This community effort assures all funding has maximum effect. The program welcomes all, but focuses its efforts on the under-insured and under-served; those who "need our services most, but can least afford them".

## Why Our Services Are Needed

Four factors make it urgently necessary to provide these services in our support and outreach model:

- Breast Cancer survivors in impoverished groups and ethnic groups tend to fare worse and get diagnosed at a later stage or not seek treatment at all. This results in higher mortality rates and later staging in these groups.
- Symptoms are debilitating and are not mitigated by our current paradigm.
- Science shows integrative services can alleviate symptoms but are not affordable or covered by insurance.
- No other non-profit is addressing long term outcomes with this replicable and independently validated model.

When a woman is diagnosed with breast cancer or finds a lump, fear and panic are the first reaction; these emotions are recurrent throughout treatment, and continue even after conventional medical treatment ends. In addition to the physical discomfort of the disease, often there is debilitating physical and emotional consequences from the treatment protocols themselves. In addition to multiple operations, nausea, hair loss, and relentless fatigue, there is “chemo fog”, neuropathy, and many times prolonged pain so severe that patients are unable to get out of bed for weeks, to name but a few. Imagine that you are a single mother, upon whose income the household sustainability depends. Add to that the substantial financial burden that is incurred as a result of this disease and the treatment that it requires. Because of the demands of treatment, it is unquestionable that taking off of work will result; many times patients are unable to work for a year, even with an early diagnosis. At best, the patient will only suffer the negative effects of a reduced income – at worst, she could lose her job and/or her children could lose their mother. The extreme emotional pressures added to the physical stress result in a secondary psychological traumatic stress that is not addressed by our current system. This hinders outcomes.

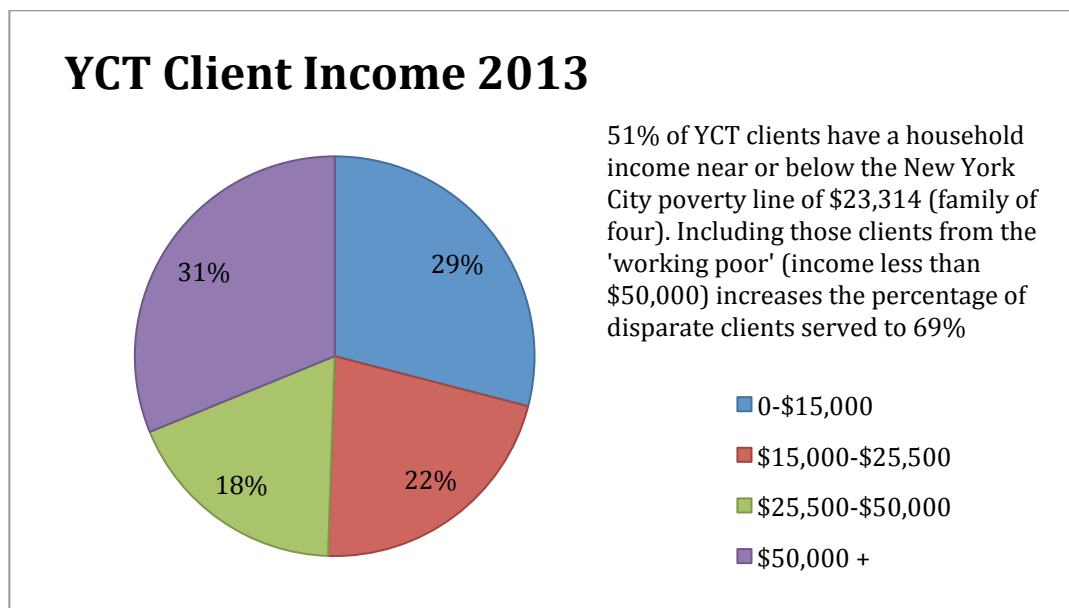
**This is the chasm that YCT bridges.** Epigenetics tells us that unhealthy genes are not the cause of disease, rather the disease is caused by the environment the cells replicate in. This is illustrated by recent findings in (WHEL) Women’s Healthy Eating & Living study which showed that lifestyle interventions like diet and exercise can double breast cancer survival rates. A treatment with results of this magnitude is imperative and You Can Thrive is the most impressive example of helping women implement these techniques. Palliative care trains patients to transition from patient to thriver and to change their relationship to the environment through their lifestyle, this improves cellular health and outcomes long-term.

Via symptom reduction services, suffering is reduced; with relaxation techniques such as movement, meditation and nutritional education, emotional and physical health is addressed. Quality of life and outlook improves. This has, and will continue to show a great impact on outcomes. We must be a provider of tools and support for women diagnosed to repair the physical and emotional self, mitigate side effects and remain hopeful so that they can remain compliant with treatments and get through the experience.

Additionally, counseling breast cancer survivors regarding good nutrition results in educating children/others in the household. Establishing the importance of exercise and mediation in overall health also impacts the household – so we are not only restoring health to the client, but providing healthy examples to the entire family. The next generation establishes healthy practices and we can reduce overall incidence of disease. We believe that this innovative imperative our best hope for prevention practices to pass to the next generation. We believe that prevention is the cure.

## What we've accomplished:

Our service area concentrates on the five boroughs of New York City, and is one of the most ethnically, culturally and economically diverse populations in the country. Since opening our first center in 2007, we've treated 600 women with long-term access to transformative services and reached tens of thousands with preventative healthcare information and education at conferences and through varied media sources. We have become a trusted source as a voice for patients by the largest media outlet in the world. Eyewitness News consistently calls YCT for comments on breaking news and patient views. We've documented a steady increase in the number of Hispanic women in our programs since inception. From 2011-2012, the percentage of Hispanic clients rose from 11% to 18%, a 63% increase. Other underserved groups have increased as well. More than any other accomplishment, our home, New York City has seen a steady decrease in the mortality rates from breast cancer for both white women and black women since the implementation of our programming—while other cities have leveled off or had an increase in mortality.



Our programs have internal sustainability with in-kind and client donations making up a large percentage of our funding. Each client 'pays it forward' when they can afford it towards assisting another survivor.

In 2011 we moved into a **10,000 SF donated space** (our third larger center) and increased our capacity for operations. We utilized 25-30 volunteers per week with over 60 active volunteers. We were running like a well-oiled community, when Hurricane Sandy hit. The storm impacted both our administrative office and our Center; post-storm we have been able to continue offering services utilizing several smaller spaces around the city with the help of our dedicated volunteers.

Some outreach activities in 2013 included presentations at The AVON Forum by Ms. DeAngelis and an exhibit at Columbia University's Breast Cancer Management Conference, as well as a speaking engagement at the annual Annie Appleseed Project "Evidence-Based Complementary and Alternative Cancer Therapies conference". Ongoing lectures at our locations focus on an assortment of nutritional topics specifically for our survivors, while professional volunteers provide training for self-care at these events.

Our holistic palliative approach takes place outside hospitals and provides an innovative way to gain the trust of those populations who have a generalized mistrust of conventional medicine, but resonate with natural

means. We are certain that the fact that Luana DeAngelis (Founder/Executive Director) is a *Survivor/Navigator* plays a prominent role in the success of YCT in its work with noncompliant patients. She is able to counsel with conviction and confidence, and mitigate distrust of conventional medical practices. Her alliance with Dr. Sheldon Feldman and other prominent oncology doctors strengthens her ability to alleviate misgivings among clients and gives YCT a proven track record on facilitating the best possible outcome for non-compliant clients.

YCT has established immense community confidence as an unbiased source of integrative care and information throughout NYC; we enjoy referral partnerships from many hospitals and support from Avon Foundation for Women.

### **When are our services available?**

- Patient Advocacy is available 7 days/week via phone and/or in person
- Patient Navigation Services are available in person 5 days/week from 8 am - 8 pm
- Hands-on Treatment Protocols are available daily from volunteers
- Generalized Public Outreach is conducted via 12+ events per year

### **Where can clients access our services?**

- Patient Advocacy & Navigation is available via phone and in person with one of our trained Survivor/Navigators in the following ways:
- On the phone by placing a call to the YCT Hotline
- YCT public outreach activities within the community
- Referral/shared programs with conventional medical facilities
- Public events with SHARE, Urban Zen, Annie Appleseed, Breast Treatment Task Force, Avon and others

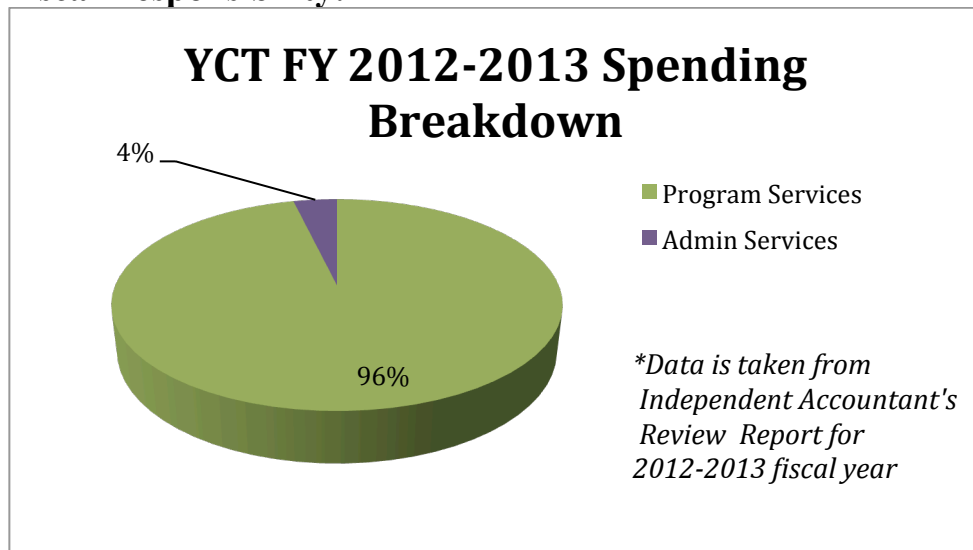
Hands-on Treatment is administered at 115 E 23<sup>rd</sup> St. each Sunday, from 10am – 5pm

Treatments also take place at offices around the city depending upon where the client lives, we have volunteers in Manhattan, Long Island, Brooklyn, Bronx and Queens.

Nutritional Education is offered in person and via our website and public events

Peer Support is available via Social Media at the YCT Facebook page and the YCT Survivors' Circle

### **Fiscal Responsibility:**



## Our Vision for the future:

### **You Can Thrive!**

A solidified long-term integrative rehabilitation facility open to all cancers and serving all hospitals. Better outcomes for our entire community with improved mortality rates among groups that tend to fare worse after cancer. A community with children who grow up using healthy practices and who understand the prevention of illness and disease.



As with most nonprofits, adequate funding to carry out our aspirations continues to be the foremost challenge. The need for our services has been well established. The most 2011 Susan B. Komen Community Profile Report found that nearly 30% of the households in the Greater NYC service area were making under \$25,000 annually. “The economic recession in the U.S. has particularly affected the medically underserved in the Greater NYC region who were already one paycheck away from disaster in grave circumstances.” The lack of insurance coverage, combined with the rising rates of breast cancer, make the free services that we organize imperative for the physical and emotional health & wellbeing of New York residents and their children.

### **Short term**

- 1) Continue to provide and expand services in one or more accessible safe spaces.
- 2) Build our infrastructure, strengthen management and add larger programming events.
- 3) Expand on our current referral partnerships within hospitals and with other service providers.

## **Long term**

- 1) A special Mobile Relief Unit with a microcosm of our programming to outreach and better brand our project and foundation. Building upon the success of the mobile Mammogram vans, our Mobile Unit will travel into local communities to provide many of the same services that clients receive at the Center – patient advocacy/navigation, as well as hands-on treatments will be offered, along with healthy snacks to introduce clients to the role that nutrition plays in the prevention of disease.

YCT will coordinate the travel/locale of the Mobile Relief Unit with demographics from current YCT clients combined with input from our hospital referral partners. The goal will be to venture into the communities where there is the greatest need, create a presence, build trust, and educate citizens as regards breast cancer – both treatment and prevention. In addition to providing education/advocacy and recruiting volunteers, the Mobile Relief Unit will have one or more therapists on board to provide hands-on services (Acupuncture, Reiki, Massage, and Essential Oils) to new/existing clients. (the driver will be “dual duty” in that he/she will also be able to offer services, whether hands-on or advocacy/education. Printed educational materials will be available for community members to take home with them, for future reference and to share with others. By extending Center offerings into the community, the Mobile Relief Unit will contribute to the branding of the Foundation; according to data from the NY Department of Transportation Billboard Studies, it is estimated that over an 8 hour period, 65,000 people will view the vehicle during outreach events.

- 2) Acquisition/construction of a permanent brick & mortar building/space to house our High Quality Integrative Cancer Rehabilitation Facility and all our services, under one roof
- 3) Replicating this Model of Treatment throughout the U.S.

## **In Summary:**

You Can Thrive has built and sustained a growing community in a well-identified area of need through an innovative and replicable model. Our organization serves an ethnically diverse and financially disparate population with multiple barriers to treatment (financial, linguistic, religious, bias/fear). By its very nature, this group requires more time and attention to move them to treatment and help them remain compliant. New, creative methods must be employed to reach them within the communities in which they reside. Because our clients come from different cultures, the need to educate them regarding preventing new disease by changing their lifestyle is a primary component to living a healthy life and modeling that for their children.

In funding our project(s) you will be sustaining a project with a wide impact not only in the present generation, but many generations that will follow – in addition, you will be instrumental in creating a paradigm shift in regards to optimal after care for cancer patients, across the entire treatment continuum. Thank you for your time and consideration.

## **Our Board of Directors:**

[Lauren Camp](#), Managing Director JP Morgan

[Luana DeAngelis](#) Chairperson

[Dr. Sheldon Feldman](#), MD Chief Breast Surgery, New York Presbyterian Hospital/Columbia University Medical Center, Vice Chair

[Dr. Mitchell Gaynor](#), MD Integrative Oncologist and Author, New York Hospital /Private Practice



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**Client experience/outcome is the most gratifying part of our work.**

Here are a few video testimonials from some of our recent clients. Just click to watch:



### TASHA: Thriving after Breast Cancer.

2 months ago

Pink for People means you support people with cancer. Avon is Pink for People and you can be too! Tasha is telling her story. ...

> YouCanThrive uploaded a video 2 months ago



### JUDITH: Thriving! with Holistic Breast Cancer Support Model

2 months ago

Pink for People means you support people with cancer. Tasha is telling her story. Tell yours at <http://youcanthrive.org> Be Pink for...

> YouCanThrive uploaded a video 2 months ago



### CARLA is Thriving! through Breast Cancer

2 months ago

Pink for People means you support people with cancer. Carla is telling her story. Tell yours at <http://youcanthrive.org> Be Pink for...

> YouCanThrive uploaded a video 2 months ago



### ARLENE: How to Thrive! Living with Breast Cancer

2 months ago

Pink for People means you support people with cancer. Tasha is telling her story. Tell yours at <http://youcanthrive.org> Be Pink fo...



**Barrie R. Cassileth, MS, PhD**  
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Chief, Integrative Medicine Service  
1429 First Avenue, New York, New York 10021  
Cassileth@MSKCC.org

August 6, 2013

To Whom It May Concern:

It is my pleasure to encourage your support of the *You Can Thrive!* Foundation. It has also been my pleasure to help mentor and guide the leadership of this most worthy Foundation. As you know, *You Can Thrive!* has created an extraordinary integrative program that helps cancer survivors reduce symptoms and gain survivorship tools when they need it most, and can afford it least.

Because of its programmatic goals, and due to the unwavering, creative dedication of Founding Director Luana DeAngelis, *You Can Thrive!* already has achieved many important goals and assisted numerous patients who otherwise surely would have floundered.

*You Can Thrive!* requires help to continue and expand its goals-to reach more patients and cancer survivors who very much need and will benefit from the guidance and care provided by this innovative program. Foundation and donor support are essential to the very important efforts of this unique patient advocacy program.

Please feel free to contact me with any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Barrie R. Cassileth".

Barrie R. Cassileth, MS, PhD