

VIGIL Script for August 9, 2020
By Karen Wyatt MD

1. Introduction:

Today is the 9th day of August 2020. On the ninth of each month, communities are invited to hold space for reflection on life, death, and transformation and so I invite you to join me in a vigil today and on the ninth day of each coming month.

Today we come together in this Vigil to hold space for the uncertainty that currently looms over life on our planet and over our individual day-to-day existence. We acknowledge the fragility of life, the cumulative pain of loss that occurs on a daily basis around the world, the confusion that arises from unanswered questions, and the anxiety of living with constant uncertainty. Today we face all of this discomfort head-on and welcome it rather than run from it. We call upon the wisdom of our ancestors and the hope of our future generations as we navigate our way through these days of unknowing.

2. Focus intention with 3 deep breaths

3. Blessing for Lighting the Candle

As we light this candle
We illuminate the liminal space that contains all of the unknown and unanswered questions that trouble us. We find comfort in the small circle of light that surrounds us as we sit in the midst of this darkness, knowing only that love is the brightest light of all.

We allow this light to lead us one step at a time toward the certainty and answers that we seek.

4. Poem:

Wild Geese by Mary Oliver

You do not have to be good.
You do not have to walk on your knees

for a hundred miles through the desert repenting.
You only have to let the soft animal of your body
love what it loves.
Tell me about despair, yours, and I will tell you mine.
Meanwhile the world goes on.
Meanwhile the sun and the clear pebbles of the rain
are moving across the landscapes,
over the prairies and the deep trees,
the mountains and the rivers.
Meanwhile the wild geese, high in the clean blue air,
are heading home again.
Whoever you are, no matter how lonely,
the world offers itself to your imagination,
calls to you like the wild geese, harsh and exciting -
over and over announcing your place
in the family of things.

5. Reflection

We currently struggle under a burden of uncertainty on our planet that is affecting every person, every system, every institution, every life form. We have entered a portal of darkness and mystery where the future is unknown and cannot be foretold. This is the narrow gate-the passageway of suffering and despair-that has preceded every great leap of transformation and consciousness throughout history.

We acknowledge our fear and confusion in this moment. We don't know who to trust or what to believe. We are floundering and exhausted in these waters of uncertainty with no place to stand, no stable ground on which to rest. But meanwhile the world goes on-the sun rises and falls, the rain comes and goes, wild geese follow their migration patterns season after season. Life everywhere is uncertain-and yet life proceeds with a predictable rhythm in the wildness of nature.

Thich Nhat Hahn wrote: People sacrifice the present for the future. But life is available only in the present. That is why we should walk in such a way that every step can bring us to the here and the now.

We humans view life through our egos that demand answers and explanations and justification for every event. Yet life, which is only available in this present moment, offers us instead of answers, mystery and uncertainty—the keys to creativity, innovation, transformation and transcendence. We cannot grow without surrendering to these times of uncertainty.

Let us recognize now that the world—this planet—over and over again offers itself to us as a home, a nest, a resting place for our uncertainty. Let us find our footing in this present moment within the wildness of nature and the stable laws of the universe. We are right where we are supposed to be at exactly the right time. That is the only answer we need in this moment.

6. Introduction for silent contemplation

As we now contemplate how to live within the uncertainties that exist in our world, we extend our hearts in compassion to all who suffer in our communities, to all of humankind, to nature and the entire planet. We hold our own unanswered questions in one hand and the law of love that governs the universe in the other hand. Placing our hands together over our hearts we envision how the certainty of pure love overwhelms the fear and confusion of all that is unknown. We hold space here for all who suffer illness, grief, unemployment, hunger, loss of shelter and security and justice. Unconditional love fills our hearts and motivates us to acts of generosity toward all who are suffering in this moment.

Breathing in we fill our hearts with the light of compassion, breathing out we radiate empowered love in every direction, to all who need it right now.

Continue breathing love in and out for as long as you like as you pray or meditate.

7. Music and time for silent contemplation

8. Benediction

Having come together in this vigil for uncertain times we now prepare to return to our daily lives. Repeat after me:

As I walk through this troubled world

When I see darkness around me – I remember the sun that rises without fail
When I am overwhelmed with uncertainty – I remember the patience of wild geese, waiting for the perfect time to fly
When I am worried about the future – I focus on this present moment
When I am lost and alone – I remember that the planet continually calls me to be at home
When I feel fear – I remember the love that created this universe
Over and over again – I breathe – I fill my heart with love – I step forward to heal this world
The world needs me now – and I am enough – and I'm exactly where I'm supposed to be