

JOIN A PEACE VIGIL! TAKE THE PLEDGE

I am a big champion of Peace Vigils. As I have said before I think they do make a difference even though it can be imperceptible at times. Since the Iraq war began I've been a regular member of two Peace Vigils at Ground Zero. One has been suspended but the other has survived through bitter cold and blistering heat. It hasn't been easy but we hang on. Sometimes there are just two of us but that's the minimum to keep it going.

I think everyone should join a Peace Vigil and I am urging you to do so.

I believe that if everyone took a pledge to go and stand for one hour a month at a vigil, extraordinary things could happen. Do the math, it's so easy. There are thousands of people who are anti-war in this city. A regular once a week vigil can have 7, 8, or 9 people every week if just 30 people make the pledge to come once a month. That way it's not a strain on any small number of people who get burnt out carrying it all on their shoulders. There are at least four ongoing vigils in NYC that I know of but there are probably more. And if there is no vigil near where you live or work START ONE!! It's easy, make a few phone calls.



READ THIS IF YOU'RE STILL NOT CONVINCED.

THERE ARE AT LEAST 2,327 REASONS WHY PEACE VIGILS ARE WORTH THE EFFORT; HERE ARE JUST TEN

- 1)** Vigils let people connect and bond in an important way. The way that identifies them as part of “We the people”. The success of vigils can’t just be measured by what specific policies are changed but by the deeper, long range project of cultivating the roots of citizen participation.
- 2)** Passersby not only see the physical evidence that there is another perspective not represented in the media but, even if they disagree, they respect people who are active and doing something.
- 3)** Vigils are democratic. There is no hierarchy, no celebrities. Everyone who attends is equal. Last summer I attended a small demonstration on Long Island with Danny Glover and he trudged around in a circle holding a placard like everyone else. (well, almost)
- 4)** If what we envision is a world where cooperation and collective action play an important role, it can’t be a future goal, we must do that right from the beginning.

5) Vigils do not require any planning. There are no strategy sessions, no division of labor, no technical skills required. Just one simple task; SHOW UP.

6) Vigils are free and very low maintenance. No city permits are required and no donations are required to keep them going, only your willpower.

7) Vigils are the epitome of a grassroots community presence. They can be almost anywhere in any neighborhood at any time. A peace movement has to be multidimensional. Vigils are the “front lines”.

8) Mass demonstrations are exhilarating for a day and serve primarily to attract media attention. Fine, vigils are about “staying power” and we ARE the media, the oldest media known to humanity, face to face communication.

9) Internet activism is a great innovation that everyone should participate in but we can’t just become armchair activists. There has to be a human physical dimension of just being “out there”.

10) The strength of the vigil is that it resuscitates and champions that essential primal relationship that has been grossly devalued by technology and modern society: One on one, eyeball to eyeball human contact with “the other”

So take the pledge. There are no forms to fill out. Nobody will mark you present or absent. But imagine this. What would



happen if every 20 blocks or so in NYC you saw 5 to 10 people standing with anti-war signs and handing out flyers. What if you knew they were always there, regularly no matter what. I know what I think. I think ABC, NBC, CBS, FOX, CNN and all the

rest would need us more than we would need them!

So take the pledge! Now's the time!

Peace,
Russell