

Vigil Planning Checklist

Discuss the Vision

- Ask the dying person what a vigil means to them
- Explore cultural, spiritual, or religious preferences
- Identify favorite music, readings, or rituals

Set the Atmosphere

- Choose lighting (candles, lamps, natural light)
- Place threshold markers (sign, candle, ribbon)
- Encourage soft voices and calm presence

Manage the Environment

- Remove unnecessary medical equipment
- Keep the room tidy and organized
- Provide comfortable chairs, blankets, and tissues

Emotional Care

- Remind family that the dying may still hear
- Encourage gentle tears but pause overwhelming grief outside the room
- Keep arguments or anger away from the bedside
- Remove negative or chaotic energy when needed

Spiritual & Cultural Support

- Invite clergy, elders, or spiritual leaders

- Arrange rituals: blessings, prayers, chanting, Last Rites (if Catholic)
- Use sacred or cultural items (beads, crystals, icons, herbs)

Connection & Memory

- Read letters, poetry, or scripture aloud
- Share family stories or favorite memories
- Encourage children to participate with drawings or songs
- Create a memory book or blessing wall

Sound & Music

- Play calming or meaningful music
- Include live music (flute, drum, or singing) if available
- Allow for moments of silence

Comfort & Care for All

- Keep water and light snacks available
- Offer breaks for caregivers and visitors
- Provide a journal for reflections, prayers, or gratitude notes