

Finding Hope

During this everchanging time, it is easy to get lost in feelings of worry, fear and uncertainty. While these feelings have validation, we must not lose sight of hope that there is light at the end of the tunnel. Hope is a powerful feeling that can boost mental wellness and provide strength during those moments in life that are challenging. Finding the positive when we are surrounded by news of illness, cancellation of school and activities, the postponement of important milestones and loss of income and employment, is a difficult feat, but one that is possible when we search for the stories that get overshadowed by the powerful headlines.



One such story is that of Kitty O'Meara, a former teacher and chaplain from Wisconsin. Her poem, titled, "And the People Stayed Home", was inspired by the coronavirus pandemic. It has gone viral and is being deemed "the silver lining perspective" of the COVID-19 pandemic. According to an interview in Oprah Magazine, O'Meara wrote the poem as a response to the growing anxiety she was feeling after watching news of the pandemic displayed all over the media. As stated by O'Meara, the poem "offers a story of how it could be, what we could do with this time". The poem serves as a reminder that life will one day resume back to a sense of normalcy, and perhaps, when it does, we will start anew with greater resiliency and appreciation for our lived experiences and the world around us.

"And the people stayed home" by Kitty O'Meara

And the people stayed home. And read books, and listened, and rested, and exercised, and made art, and played games, and learned new ways of being, and were still. And listened more deeply. Some meditated, some prayed, some danced. Some met their shadows. And the people began to think differently.

And the people healed. And, in the absence of people living in ignorant, dangerous, mindless, and heartless ways, the earth began to heal.

And when the danger passed, and the people joined together again, they grieved their losses, and made new choices, and dreamed new images, and created new ways to live and heal the earth fully, as they had been healed.

References: www.opramag.com