

## ACTIVITY: 6 Word Memoir

What does it mean to leave a legacy? It could mean transferring knowledge, passing on values and life lessons, or simply leaving a lasting impression for stories to be told and memories to be shared about you. What legacy will you leave at work, or in life?

You could write your memoir. A memoir is a collection of memories that you write about moments or events, public or private, that took place in your life. This could be a very time consuming process. Or, you could write a 6 word memoir. Once asked to write a full story in six words, legend has it that novelist Ernest Hemingway responded: "For Sale: baby shoes, never worn."

Below are some other examples of 6 word memoirs from famous people:

"Life is one big editorial meeting" - *Activist Gloria Steinem*

"The miserable childhood leads to royalties" - *Author Frank McCourt*

"Acting is not all I am" - *Actress Molly Ringwald*

Let's see if you can tell a story of your life in 6 words! Whether it's humorous, or profound, or somewhere in between, this exercise will give you an idea of events or memories or emotions that have some type of meaning in your life.

### Try This!

#### 1) Create a "you" list – fill the page:

List as many words as you can about yourself – things you like, feelings you have. Don't cross out, change, or rewrite anything. Don't worry about spelling – just write. You are going for quantity, so write as much as you can for at least 3 minutes.

#### 2) Circle 3 items that inspire you to say more:

Pick words from your list that, if heard aloud, would make you think about something that happened in your life, a story or an idea, or something that was important to you.

#### 3) From those items you circled, select one:

"Free write" about it for at least 2 minutes. "Free write" means you just start writing about that idea, object, role or event. The only rule is: don't stop writing for at least two minutes. Whatever comes to mind is fair game.

#### 4) Synthesize:

Develop a 6-word phrase that captures the essence of what your topic means to you.