

The Six-Word Memoir: an Introduction to Storytelling, Culture, and our own "Happily Ever After"

What would you say if you had just six words to define your life? That's the challenge Larry Smith presented to his online community, *SMITH Magazine*, in 2006. His quest was inspired by the legend that Ernest Hemingway was once challenged to write a novel in just six words. That writer's legendary result: "For sale: baby shoes, never worn."

Smith reimagined the six-word novel as the Six-Word Memoir, challenging contributors to come up with a half-dozen words of self-reflection. It turns out that the word limit encouraged rather than inhibited creativity:

- "Sometimes lonely in a crowded bed."
- "My life made my therapist laugh."
- "Wasn't born a redhead—fixed that."
- "I still make coffee for two."

At its core, the Six-Word Memoir offers a simple way for anyone of any age to try to answer the question that defines us all: Who am I?

So WHO ARE YOU?! ... in exactly SIX WORDS.

Mr T's first draft:

Son Father Grandfather Soldier Student Teacher

I will arm you with a notecard and a Sharpie. You will write your six-word memoir on the notecard, and include a simple doodle/illustration (if you choose). Be prepared to be open.

My Father's daughter

My Mother's Friend

Life Goes On

Life Goes On

Be good. They won't ignore you