



***“Your six words. Our one story.”***

**- Inclusion -**

According to legend, the novelist Ernest Hemingway was once asked to write a complete story in six words. The result: "For Sale: baby shoes, never worn." Simple and profound, powerful in their brevity, six-word memoirs are personal narratives using only six words to describe a specific event, moment, place, hope or fear that has affected or shaped your life. The variety of memoirs is as varied as the people who write them.

**Why is the theme “inclusion”?**

The City of Salem has made inclusion a priority. Writing a six word memoir about inclusion contributes to this city-wide effort and is an opportunity to showcase and reveal the diversity of our community in our own words.

***Why a six-word memoir?***

The SAF seeks to start a community-wide dialogue about inclusion in its 25th anniversary year. We see an opportunity with six-word memoirs to tell our stories and learn from one another in order to become a more fully inclusive community.

**How do I choose which event in my life is the most important- How do I pick one?**

You can write as many six-word memoirs as you feel inspired to create. The personal and specific tend to be more powerful than the general and universal. Think instead about the last time you felt left out, or cried for joy, or didn't speak up but wished you had. Please keep it positive and leave mean-spirited stories at the door.

**How will these be used?**

The SAF will collect memoirs throughout the spring to be showcased at our 25th anniversary community celebration on Sunday, June 11, 2017. Look for more details about that event soon!

### **How do I submit my six-word memoir(s)?**

You can email your completed six-word memoir(s) to [your6words@salemaward.org](mailto:your6words@salemaward.org).

Or, write it on one of the circles provided (a black Sharpie is recommended) and give to a member of the SAF Board or drop off at the front desk of the Hawthorne Hotel.

If you need more circles, email us at the address above.

Your submission can be anonymous.

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### Six Steps for Writing a Six-Word Memoir

*This strategy is only one of many possibilities. Feel free to use whichever part seems most helpful to you, or devise your own entirely.*

1. Make a list of words related to “inclusion:” Fill the page with every noun, verb, and adjective you can think of. The goal is quantity. Aim for the personal and specific v. the general and universal.
2. Circle two or three words that inspire you to say more.
3. Pick one.
4. Free write about that word for at least two minutes. Fill the page. Don't worry about spelling or grammar. Just let one thought lead to the next.
5. Identify a central compelling idea from your free-writing for your memoir.
6. Synthesize: With your central idea in mind, pick the six best words from your list and free-writing and put them in the best order.

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*Drawing upon the lessons of the Salem Witch Trials of 1692, the Salem Award Foundation promotes awareness, understanding and empathy in support of human rights, tolerance and social justice.*