



Hope at Hand

“Six Word Memoir”

Directions

1. Start: Read “Lotus Meditation”. Ask participants to close their eyes or find a focus point if they aren’t comfortable with closing their eyes.
2. Read: the quote from Goldie Hawn. Provide time for participants to circle anything that spoke to them.
3. Discuss: both the meditation and the quote. Ask participants if they visualized anything during the meditation about themselves or the world around them. Work towards grounding the discussion in inward reflection to prepare to write a six-word memoir.
4. Read: Transition to reading some examples of six-word memoirs.
5. Write: Introduce the six-word memoir template. Guide participants through the method of completing their six-word memoir. Remind them of the meditation and reflecting inward.
6. Art: Use the Lotus template and have participants put their six words on or around the flower and decorate the flower.

Please bring an example of the art activity to your session—ideally one you’ve made yourself. A full-color example is included at the end of this document. *If needed, print it elsewhere, as color printing is not permitted on the office printer.*

Materials

Lotus printout, crayons or colored pencils, pencils.

Lotus Meditation

(Buddhist value: Like a lotus flower that grows out of the mud and blossoms above the muddy water surface, we can rise above our defilements and sufferings of life)

Imagine that you are a lotus seed buried beneath a muddy lotus pond. There is mud all around you, and you can feel the mud clearly. Above you, above this muddy pool of dirt, mud, and filth, is sunshine and air. You are not disheartened as you begin your journey towards the surface. You are ready to grow towards the light.

With a determined heart, you begin to wiggle in the earth. You grow roots deep, deep into the mud. Your little stem grows up slowly. Suddenly, "pop" you are out of the mud! Your stem grows higher and higher, taller and taller. You rise up slowly, fighting against the muddy water. All of a sudden, you are out of the muddy pond! You reach up towards the warm sun, shining down on you.

Your lotus bud begins to grow on top of your stem. It expands and grows larger and larger, finally bursting into full bloom. A glorious lotus flower. You stand beautifully above the muddy water, not dirtied by the mud from which you grow. You are fragrant and beautiful.

Everyone who saw marveled at your beauty. Your determination to grow out of the muddy pond reminds them of the strength it takes to grow out of the mud.

You are a beautiful shining lotus flower, and your role is to remind people to rise above their defilements and sufferings, just as you are rising above the muddy water and not dirtied by the mud from which you grow.

Lotus Meditation

(Buddhist value: Like a lotus flower that grows out of the mud and blossoms above the muddy water surface, we can rise above our defilements and sufferings of life)

Imagine that you are a lotus seed buried beneath a muddy lotus pond. There is mud all around you, and you can feel the mud clearly. Above you, above this muddy pool of dirt, mud, and filth, is sunshine and air. You are not disheartened as you begin your journey towards the surface. You are ready to grow towards the light.

With a determined heart, you begin to wiggle in the earth. You grow roots deep, deep into the mud. Your little stem grows up slowly. Suddenly, "pop" you are out of the mud! Your stem grows higher and higher, taller and taller. You rise up slowly, fighting against the muddy water. All of a sudden, you are out of the muddy pond! You reach up towards the warm sun, shining down on you.

Your lotus bud begins to grow on top of your stem. It expands and grows larger and larger, finally bursting into full bloom. A glorious lotus flower. You stand beautifully above the muddy water, not dirtied by the mud from which you grow. You are fragrant and beautiful.

Everyone who saw marveled at your beauty. Your determination to grow out of the muddy pond reminds them of the strength it takes to grow out of the mud.

You are a beautiful shining lotus flower, and your role is to remind people to rise above their defilements and sufferings, just as you are rising above the muddy water and not dirtied by the mud from which you grow.

Excerpt from *A Lotus Grows in the Mud*

by Goldie Hawn

“The lotus is the most beautiful flower, whose petals open one by one. But it will only grow in the mud. In order to grow and gain wisdom, first you must have the mud — the obstacles of life and its suffering. ... The mud speaks of the common ground that humans share, no matter what our stations in life. ... Whether we have it all or we have nothing, we are all faced with the same obstacles: sadness, loss, illness, dying and death. If we are to strive as human beings to gain more wisdom, more kindness and more compassion, we must have the intention to grow as a lotus and open each petal one by one.”

Excerpt from *A Lotus Grows in the Mud*

by Goldie Hawn

“The lotus is the most beautiful flower, whose petals open one by one. But it will only grow in the mud. In order to grow and gain wisdom, first you must have the mud — the obstacles of life and its suffering. ... The mud speaks of the common ground that humans share, no matter what our stations in life. ... Whether we have it all or we have nothing, we are all faced with the same obstacles: sadness, loss, illness, dying and death. If we are to strive as human beings to gain more wisdom, more kindness and more compassion, we must have the intention to grow as a lotus and open each petal one by one.”

6-word Memoir Examples

Seize the moment love the journey.

The power of love and family.

Life is best in the moment.

Happy days yesterday, today, and tomorrow.

I'm always afraid of standing still.

Fall down twice, get up thrice.

Tomorrow is not that far away.

No time for a dress rehearsal.

Sink or swim? I grew fins.

Life is always a learning journey.

Viewed as strongest but lonely inside.

If you do something look good!

Receiving career and geographic wandering women.

Sometimes I am my true self.

With hard work, the path clears.

Beautiful baby daughter becomes beautiful adult.

Fast running doesn't win the race.

A blessed journey of new challenges.

6-word Memoir Examples

Seize the moment love the journey.

The power of love and family.

Life is best in the moment.

Happy days yesterday, today, and tomorrow.

I'm always afraid of standing still.

Fall down twice, get up thrice.

Tomorrow is not that far away.

No time for a dress rehearsal.

Sink or swim? I grew fins.

Life is always a learning journey.

Viewed as strongest but lonely inside.

If you do something look good!

Receiving career and geographic wandering women.

Sometimes I am my true self.

With hard work, the path clears.

Beautiful baby daughter becomes beautiful adult.

Fast running doesn't win the race.

A blessed journey of new challenges.

Choosing the Best Words for Six-Word Memoirs

- Jot down ideas, words, and phrases that focus on describing your unique life experience; *This is your memoir.*

- It should capture a significant moment, feeling, or idea.
- Organize them in a meaningful way to include only 6 words. Choose strong, evocative words and avoid unnecessary ones.

My 6-Word Memoir

Choosing the Best Words for Six-Word Memoirs

- Jot down ideas, words, and phrases that focus on describing your unique life experience; *This is your memoir.*

- It should capture a significant moment, feeling, or idea.
- Organize them in a meaningful way to include only 6 words. Choose strong, evocative words and avoid unnecessary ones.

My 6-Word Memoir

TOMORROW ISN'T GIVEN



BUT TODAY IS



