

## EPITAPH



PREPARED BY: Cooperativa RUAH

*The epitaph or epitaph (Ancient Greek: ἐπιτάφιον, epitáphion, meaning 'that which is above the tomb') is a funerary inscription intended to honour and remember a deceased person. Usually, but not always, it is one or more lines of a poem: many poets have composed their own epitaph. (Wikipedia)*

## TAGS (3 categorizations)

Is this activity focusing on one of the 3 steps of the method or tackling a transversal challenge facilitators may face?	Step of the method	YES	Decentering X	Discovery of the frames of references of the other	Negotiation
	Challenge treated	NO			

## Small Description

*Please explain in a short paragraph (using grammatically correct full sentences) what your activity is about, why did you create it?*

Each participant is invited to introduce him/herself to the class group by imagining him/herself dead and producing his/her own epitaph: "Here lies...". As well as fostering mutual understanding between participants, this exercise can be used to:

- Break the ice in a stimulating/spiritual/shocking way
- Invite participants to "get involved" right from the start
- Introduce the concepts of identity, culture, intercultural approach
- Introduce the sense of a learning process

## Quick info

TIME FRAME	GROUP SIZE	FACILITATION LVL	COMFORT ZONE	MATERIALS
30-60 min	3-18	intermediate		Signs (minimum A3, perhaps in the shape of a tombstone) Markers Candles

## Preparations needed

- If possible, set up the setting with suffused lights (or candles, soft music in the background, etc.) and the possibility to perform the activity on the ground
- Provide a suitable space for the display and visitation of epitaphs

## Instructions Step By Step

*Please give step by step instructions of your activity, including debriefing. Be direct, address the reader as a facilitator directly: eg. ask your participants to stand in a circle...*

*Step 1.*

Presentation of the activity: each person is invited to write a (self) epitaph (HERE HE LIKES...; HE HAS LEAVED US...), functional to the activity of mutual presentation. The facilitator could ask to write a self epitaph including important thing about your life/community/identity. Presentation of the setting set up to support the success of the activity: soft lighting, candles, soft music in the background, cards (as a tombstone?).

*Step 2.*

Personal moment (10') for writing one's epitaph (on the chairs, on the ground, in a specific corner of the room...). Once the writing is finished. Each person "displays" their epitaph in the specially prepared setting (e.g. with a lit candle).

*Step 3.*

Everyone is invited to visit (freely, but with due demeanour) the epitaphs on display (5').

*Step 4.*

New plenary meeting to debrief the activity: How did it go? Difficulties? What emerged?

Return on the sense of this activity

- stimulating-provoking-intriguing tool, which brings into play

- the here and now
- the know how to be dimension as the main field of work of Training in intercultural approach
- the training activity as a process of self change □ to born as a new subject, different from the previous one (whose death we ritualise)
- to introduce a culturally connoted element
- to give mutual meaning (compare Martine Abdallah-Pretceille's definition of "intercultural").

#### *Step 5.*

Closing by reading a literary text appropriate to the situation.

#### *Step 6.*

Further development of the activity. From the analysis of the epitaph, highlight the identity traits useful to strengthen the role of a trainer in interculturality: why is someone like me entitled to do training on intercultural approach? If we were buried in the mausoleum of the pioneers of interculturality, what would we add/emphasise

Debriefing Highlight the importance of putting oneself at stake to highlight the traits of one's cultural identity (and train one's capacity for decentralisation!).

### Hints for the facilitator

- Give few indications, give only the incipit: here lies...
- Explain first what is meant by epitaph
- Do not make the objectives and the meaning of the activity explicit beforehand.
- The trainer can also do the activity

### Ressources (Who invented this activity or who inspired it)

*If you invented it, please write the name of your colleague and institution as you'd like it to be referenced*

*If you used ideas /activities of others please put full reference as concretely as you can*

Activity developed by Nicola Di Pirro, Giancarlo Domenghini and Marco Muzzana within the training programme "Training of initiation to intercultural approach".