

# The Traveler Within



## Enhancing Life Through The Way Engagement

*“Love life. Engage in it. Give it all you've got. Love it with a passion because life truly does give back, many times over what you put into it.”* – Maya Angelo

There is no doubt that travelers “love life and engage in it with passion,” however the notion of “giving it all you’ve got” is an elevated degree of engagement that only the most dedicated travelers rise to. Maya Angelo’s quote also suggests an intriguing investment proposition; a kind of *law of exponential reciprocation* in which life recognizes our degree of participation and rewards us many times over for it. This is a curious notion and invites a deeper inquiry into its meaning so let’s go ahead and explore it now.

As a longtime outdoorsman I can relate to *life’s reciprocation*. If I want a fish for breakfast I need to catch one. Likewise if I want heat and light, I need to build a campfire and keep it stoked with wood. No fishy no eaty. No wood, no heat or light. But Maya Angelo’s quote ventures beyond the veil of mere equitable exchange by suggesting that life gives back to us *many times over*. So how does this work? How might we engage in the activity of catching a meal in a way that prompts life to feed us for a lifetime . . . or at least for a few days?

The key is in exploring the underlying meaning of the word, “engage.” From Anglo-French, *engager*, or *en-* means “to give” and *gage* means “to pledge of one’s self.” So what does it mean to give of and pledge of ourselves? The answer depends on how we define our “self,” or who we consider ourselves to be.

For those who closely identify who they are with their physical form, their main venue of engagement in life is through their body. For those who associate themselves with their mental prowess, their mind is their foremost means of engagement. Those who associate themselves with feelings and emotions engage with life through the vulnerability of the heart. And those who’ve cultivated a spiritual presence or persona engage in life through the divinity of the soul.

Having multiple expressions of body, mind, heart and soul to offer up to life in exchange for its exponential reciprocations now begins to make sense. The opportunity to engage in life fully is to *give and pledge ourselves* in not just *one* way, but in *multiple* ways. And so with each additional way we give of ourselves to life, life gives back to us many times over.

For example, if we pledge our body to engage in physical exercise, life will reward us with greater health and vitality. And while we engage with our body, if we also engage our mind, not only do we become more vital, our mental acuity increases. If then simultaneously we add our willingness to engage in life with an open heart, our physical, mental and emotional well-being exponentially expands. And finally, if we also include engaging our soul, the grace of God and Spirit blesses us with an abundance of love and gratitude; definitely a *giving back to us many times more than what we put into it*.

While a bit overwhelming to consider at first, pledging ourselves to life in multiple ways isn't any more difficult than say, learning how to walk, talk and chew gum at the same time. Human nature is far more capable than we sometimes give it credit for. So then in summary the key quality and practice for the *Traveler Within* is to seek out venues of *engagement* in life that call upon us to "*give it all we've got,*" physically, mentally, emotionally and spiritually. While this may seem to some like overdoing it, why not give life our all? After all, what other venue of investment could possibly enhance our lives more than life itself?



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