

## I Give You What You Give Me (Part 3)



By now, we've talked about reflection, awareness, and the way energy tends to bounce back and forth between two people. But there's another layer that complicates everything—because not all giving is healthy, and not all reciprocity is balanced.

At some point, the conversation has to shift from *“what are we giving each other?”* to *“how much of myself am I giving away?”*

Because there's a difference between matching energy... and losing yourself in it.

A lot of people enter relationships thinking they're being generous, patient, understanding—until they

realize they've slowly crossed into overextension. They're doing more than they're receiving, not because they're forced to, but because they're hoping effort will eventually be returned. That's where “I give you what you give me” starts to get blurry. Because now it's not about balance—it's about waiting.

And waiting changes people.

What often starts as intentional giving turns into quiet depletion. You start adjusting your standards without noticing. You accept less clarity. You excuse inconsistency. You tell yourself, “this is just their way,” while ignoring the fact that your own needs are quietly being pushed to the side.

Here's the hard truth: not every imbalance is a reflection of someone else's lack. Sometimes it's a reflection of your tolerance for imbalance.

That doesn't mean you're responsible for how someone else shows up—but it does mean you're responsible for what you continue to participate in.

Boundaries are where this whole conversation gets real. Because boundaries aren't about withholding energy—they're about directing it with intention. They

define where your effort ends and where your self-respect begins. Without them, “giving” can easily turn into over-functioning in someone else’s emotional life.

And over time, that creates resentment. Not always loud resentment—but quiet exhaustion. The kind where you start questioning why you’re even trying so hard in the first place.

This is where a lot of people get stuck. They confuse consistency with over-investment. They confuse patience with self-abandonment. And they stay in cycles where they’re constantly “giving what they get,” without realizing they’re also accepting less than they actually want.

But here’s the shift: healthy energy isn’t just reactive, and it isn’t just generous—it’s grounded. It knows when to engage and when to step back. It doesn’t require you to overextend to prove value. And it doesn’t require someone else to change before you decide how you show up.

That’s the real balance—not equal effort in every moment, but equal respect for yourself in every interaction.

And when you start operating from that place, something interesting happens: you stop needing to match energy, because you’re already clear on your own.

So maybe the question isn’t just “what are they giving me?”

Or even “what am I giving them?”

It becomes: *“Am I staying aligned with myself in what I’m allowing?”*

Because that answer tells you more than the entire exchange ever could.

And that brings us to the final layer of this series.

In Part 4, we’ll explore what happens when energy doesn’t just mismatch—but when it actually evolves over time, and how to recognize when to recalibrate instead of repeat.