

To Give Is To Live

Love as the gift of self neither expects nor requires anything in return.

The pelican, a medieval symbol of love, will pluck its chest vein if needed to feed its offspring.

Love can take many forms.

When family members and friends gather joyfully around a loved one who has a new success, love can take the form of celebration.

When someone is suffering and needs support, love can take the form of active compassion.

When someone needs to be reconciled with the community, with loved ones, or with a nation after making mistakes of significance, love can take the form of forgiveness.

When someone falls ill and has needs that only others can meet, love can take the form of care.

When solitude grows tiring, love can take the form of companionship.

When the value of others is not affirmed – when hatreds and harmful actions abound – love can take the form of correction.

The self that is unloving is untransformed. Giving ourselves in unselfish love is transformative. This is the universal law of renewal.

– culled from the Introduction to *Unlimited Love: Altruism, Compassion, and Service*, by Stephen G. Post (Templeton Press, 2003)