

# What do you mean?

My favorite, most commonly asked question.  
I can pose it to anyone, anywhere.  
And it always yields interesting results.

I love watching as the speaker takes a beat to rework something in their head before launching deeper into what they are trying to express.  
I love listening as they whisper “Actually...”, a telltale sign they’re coming to some new understanding about what they thought they already knew.  
(Expansion.)

I love traveling with them to that place, bearing witness.

It is a creative process.  
It is intimate.  
It can be, or often is, a reclamation.

*What do you mean?*

Teach me. Show me what you mean, in only the way you can. Share with me how you see the world.

There are so many positives that can result from this situation.  
The speaker feels seen, and safe to rephrase their thoughts. To edit themselves, or to open up further.  
They exercise a fundamental freedom by saying exactly what they mean, or occasionally realizing they don’t know what they mean (which are equally powerful in my opinion).

I satiate my endless curiosity for knowing what goes on inside other people’s minds, and my own perspective is challenged or changed in some way. (Expansion.)

And I am gifted the opportunity to practice true compassion and patience, to see and feel the human experience as it differs from or resonates with my own.

But I think the most important and rewarding result is the connection we often form. Fleeting as it may seem to be, it is formed, and we are somehow changed because of it.

*What do you mean?*