

Maya's Courage

Moving toward the energized life

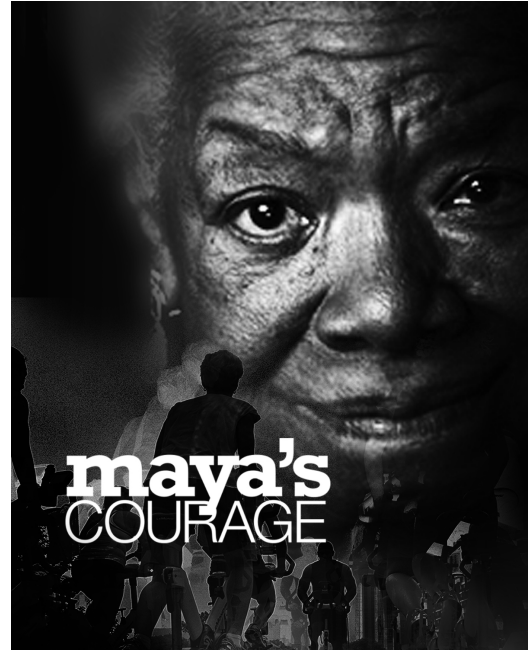
Created by Billy Coburn, Star 3 SPINNING® Instructor
Training Type: Journey Ride
Working HR Zones: Moderate to Hard
Total Class Length: 60 minutes

Profile Objective:

This ride was originally designed to be an indoor cycling journey taken outside into the open air of unlimited possibilities. The life of Maya Angelou teaches much about perseverance, dedication, humility, and unconditional love. But above all else, she conveys that “none of life’s virtues could be accomplished without COURAGE.” This ride is designed so that Maya’s legacy may encourage our own.

The objective of this class is to help your riders identify an answer to this statement:

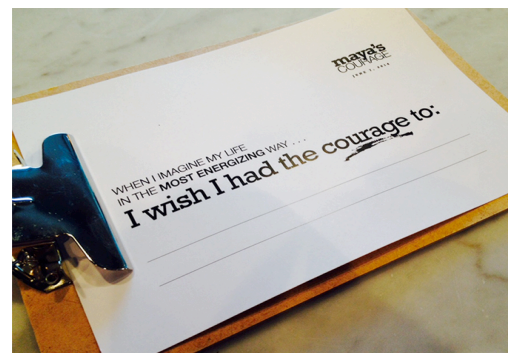
“WHEN I IMAGINE MY LIFE IN THE MOST ENERGIZING WAY . . . I wish I had the courage to: _____”



This class was designed to be done outdoors, therefore no video clips are included; I did intertwine excerpts from her interviews and keynotes throughout the ride. The YouTube links are cited at the end of this document for reference. You will also find the following handout referred to during the ride. It is important to print these on an opaque cardstock so the riders are not aware there is information on the back of the card, which is revealed at the end of the ride.

(I picked up clipboards from an office supply chain for \$1.99 each, and used removable glue dots to ensure the cards did not “flap up.” This also served to hide the quote on the reverse side until it is revealed later in the ride.)

As riders arrive, this is what each found on their bike, with a marker attached, as well as their towel draped across each bike. From the moment each cyclist arrived, the statement on the clipboard helped plant the thought of “courage” in their thinking. Our club has LeMond bikes, which have perfect bars to hold clipboards. Keisers also work well for this. Depending upon your bikes, some riders will move the clipboard to the floor. That’s OK; when the time comes, you can walk the room and hand the clipboard back to the rider. Some will immediately begin to answer the question, while others will probably not commit to writing an answer until later.



Two tools you may want to download:

- Djay is the name of the app to overlay voice over a music track. It's \$9.99.
- www.YouTube-MP3.org. Use this free tool to extract Maya's speeches from Youtube and save them as MP3s.

NOTE: All sound edits are indicated by the timing noted for each track.

MacBook Playback Preferences are then set to a 6-second overlap so all music fades appropriately.

NOTE: Billy fades the songs in and out based on what parts of the song he wants. We also list the full length of the song as purchased, for your reference when searching the music. For example, the first song Remember Me is 6:44 long, but Billy fades it in at 1:00 and back out at 6:00.

Arrival/Introduction

1. Remember Me, Solid Stone, A State of Trance 650, 1:00 – 6:00

(The total song length as purchased is 6:44.)

This is your gathering song. Start this one on time, and it will still give your riders about 4 minutes to get into place. The music level should be high enough that it begins to discourage talking and interaction amongst riders.

Ensure your riders are set up correctly, especially since this is a “Journey Ride”—you only want to interrupt the flow if absolutely necessary to readjust a rider. After all riders are in place, at approximately the 4:00 mark, call their attention to focus.

*Step away for a few minutes from your world!
This is a Journey Ride—a place of destination.*

I'm not so worried about your rpm, or even the perfect technical aspects of your form. Your body is going someplace today—and I would like you to release your mind to go with it. Let the music move you. Feel it. Stay attentive to the speaking throughout our Journey.

The goal is to leave here physically challenged and mentally encouraged to be all that you can be.

*The SETTING for our ride is the life of Maya Angelou.
Maya Angelou was an award-winning author, speaker, humanitarian, teacher, and professor who passed away on May 28, 2014, at the age of 86. In her lifetime she was awarded the 2010 Presidential Medal of Freedom and multiple Grammys. She was a nominee for an Emmy Award, Tony Award, and the Pulitzer Prize. She earned a Lifetime Achievement Award for Literature, and many more acknowledgements.*

Here are some interesting things to know about this fascinating woman:

*She never worked at home. She always took her work away from the house.
She always had a rented hotel room, with all decorations and distractions removed.
Room service was never allowed to come in and adjust her space.
She took her thesaurus, dictionary, bible, yellow pad, and pens.*

WHY? It's how Maya Angelou STEPPED AWAY from the world.

Can you step away from your world for the next 50 minutes?

And then look out at your class and let that sink in. This moment is very important. Your students are already wondering about this ride since the clipboards are resting on their handlebars...

Here we go.

Settle Your Mind/Warm Up the Legs

2. Another Wave from You, M83, Hurry Up, We're Dreaming, 0:00 – 1:45

(The total song length as purchased is 1:54.)

Call their attention to focus.

Starting with light resistance, the legs begin to feel the connection with the bike beneath their bodies as riders pedal at a comfortable pace of approximately 90 rpm.

*By now you've already read the words on the clipboard on each of your bikes.
Over the next few songs, begin to think about how you might fill in the blanks.*

<p>WHEN I IMAGINE MY LIFE IN THE MOST ENERGIZING WAY . . . I wish I had the courage to:</p>

*What is the **FIRST** thing that comes to your mind? Focus on it.
If you're like me, you might have numerous thoughts circulating through your mind.
Allow one dominant idea to float to the top, and center on that idea for this ride.*

Begin To Dream/Warm-Up Continues

3. I Can Only Imagine, Mercy Me with the London Symphony Orchestra, 0:10 – 4:10

(The total song length as purchased is 4:55.)

Start increasing resistance for continued warm-up. Positioning might vary as you see fit with the verses/chorus.

Maya Angelou—it's easy to recognize her accolades

- *First Black Female Streetcar Conductor*
- *Professor*
- *Doctor*
- *Linguist*
- *Grammy Award Winner*
- *Presidential Medal of Freedom*

What an AMAZING LIFE!

But it didn't start with "amazing"—her early life was nothing that any child would have imagined.

- *At the age of 7, she was raped by her mother's boyfriend.*
- *She then witnessed the death of her rapist by her uncles.*
- *Traumatized, the woman who later became one of the most prolific speakers of our time went silent. She stopped speaking for 5 to 6 years.*

*Her life started with **silent courage** . . .*

- *During WWII, she won a scholarship in San Francisco and began studying dance and acting.*
- *She became a single mom at the age of 16 with her only child, a son.*
- *In the mid-1950s her acting career took off*
- *Broadway was good to her, affording world travels.*
- *In 1969, she published I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings—the first non-fiction best seller by an African American woman.*

The Journey Begins

4. Ascencia, Jo Blankenburg, Elysium, 0:05 – 1:52

(The total song length as purchased is 2:09.)

+ Maya Angelou Excerpt #1

The short music intro provides a natural resistance increase.

Encourage riders to take up their clipboard and write down their answer (some may choose not to write it down).

Why write your answer down? Well, it's a first step. It requires muscle movement. It requires initial courage to be willing to admit, "I have stopped simply thinking about this action, and I'm going to do something."

As the ride continues, center your thoughts on what you've decided. We want to move our muscles and our brains in forward motion.

At 0:58 is where you will **merge** in Maya Angelou's first speech that sets the parameters of this ride. Her point in this speech, "*Build your courage muscle in small ways, develop your courage,*" will set the tone for this ride.

This speech lasts about 45 seconds (see notes at end of the ride) and if you merge the speech, the song will end at about the same time.

Her speech ends with "*Just do right!*"
Immediately set your riders up to "*Develop courage . . .*"

Courage Starts

5. Here and Now (feat Kerli), Cash Cash, Overtime, 0:15 – 3:30

(The total song length as purchased is 3:54.)

*Begin to start developing that courage . . . find your hill.
Increase resistance to a moderate, sustainable pace in the saddle.*

At 1:55, invite your riders to lift up to a standing climb with a resistance increase.

We'll work in and out of the saddle as the music moves YOU and ebbs and flows—just like life! Work it up!

Maya says, "We develop courage by doing small, courageous things."

Just like working out—the body you want doesn't happen overnight!

It happens one pound at a time.

One weight-lifting increment at a time.

Mind must play out over matter!

Mental exertion is required for courage! Begin to feel it!

Begin to Feel It!

6. Feel It, Danny Howard, Feel It Remixes, 0:54 – 4:00

(The total song length as purchased is 5:54.)

This music itself will encourage your riders to go for more exertion here. Add more gear.

Remind them of their purpose. Remind them of what they wrote down on the paper.

Ask questions of your riders, referring back to what they wrote down.

How would you feel if your courage prevailed and you accomplished what you wrote down on that piece of paper?

What does THAT feel like?

Spiritual exertion is required in addition to mental exertion!!!

Continue to add resistance, making the hill a little tougher, knowing that you have a recovery section coming next.

Work for that desired life. You want it bad enough to not slow down, to not give up, to continue to the finish line.

Two-Minute Recovery Section

7. Fight for You, Pia Mia, Divergent, 0:00 – 2:05

(The total song length as purchased is 4:35, so you'll only use half of the song.)

Back off resistance, easy pedaling here. Be sure to hydrate.

It's easy to think about BUILDING courage, until what happens?

Fear begins to creep in. Battles rage within us. Doubt fills our minds. Second guesses win over.

When I Google searched the phrase, "I wish I had enough courage to _____,"

I came up with an answer that I'll tell you in a moment, but I want to hear your thoughts.

What do you think the search results were?

Walk around the room and ask students what they think. My students suggested relationship topics, divorce, asking someone out, quitting their job, etc. You may find some interesting responses.

*The #1 answer in my search results on Google was this:
"I wish I had enough courage to commit suicide."*

Alarming!

*There are X (number of riders) in this room today.
Some of us might have been there. Some of us know someone who has lost courage.*

FEAR can eliminate our courage in an instant!

----- mood of ride changes momentarily here -----
(Just stay silent for a moment.)

Fear Begins to Take Hold

8. Iron Man 3, Brian Tyler, Original Iron Man 3 MP Soundtrack, 0:00 – 2:12

(The total song length as purchased is 2:23.)

Find a moderate, flat road resistance (90–100 rpm).

*What fears are preventing you from the life you desire?
Begin to feel the road beneath your feet: quick movement.
Will you **take control of the road?** Or let it control you?*

*You have TWO CHOICES with **fear** . . .*

a) Take control of your life, or

b) It will take control of you!

The decision is up to you.

Fear of failure is so very real.

YOU ARE NOT ALONE! Every single one of us has felt it.

Ride this song with the intent to conquer FEAR!

Vary your rider positions on the bike according to the flow of the music and your desires, or allow them to choose either to remain seated or to stand for a more challenging effect.

Fear Settles In, Raging on All Sides

9. Heat and Iron, Brian Tyler, Original Iron Man 3 MP Soundtrack, 2:30 – 5:42

(The total song length as purchased is 5:42, but only use the second half. The song is a great simulation of angst.)

Continue the mindset of the “battle of fear” throughout this song.

Again, help your riders navigate through this song, keeping a quick pace, encouraging them to:

Picture in your mind the fear and doubts that hold you back and keep you from a fulfilled life. How you are conquering them?

Every time you destroy the onset of fear, you allow your dreams to become more firmly rooted.

Set them up for the feeling of the next song—it will be very uplifting.

Fear Begins to Lift . . .

10. New Beginnings, Brian Tyler, Original Iron Man 3 MP Soundtrack, 0:00 – 2:12

(The total song length as purchased is 3:54.)

Stand up as the song starts, but not too intense.

Feel the freedom of conquering that forest of fear.

Show them a copy of Maya Angelou's children's book, or read these words from the book *Life Doesn't Frighten Me At All*:

*Shadows on the wall, noises down the hall,
Life doesn't frighten me at all.*

*Tough guys fight
All alone at night
Life doesn't frighten me at all!*

*Life doesn't frighten me at all.
At all.*

At all.

*Remember the young 7-year-old Maya Angelou? **Silent courage!**
The life she endured as a child, the fears she overcame, the willingness to take on that
fear, and to dare to step out...*

So, let's all take the dare!

We Realize the Reward is Worth the Risk!

11. Dare You (feat. Matthew Koma), Hardwell, Ultra Dance 15, 0:00 – 3:45

+ Maya Angelou Excerpt #2

(The total song length as purchased is 5:25.)

For this song, you will want to start the excerpted Maya Angelou speech before the intro to the music begins. Start music intro about 20 seconds into the speech and fade it back out as she concludes (the speech is 35 seconds long).

The speech begins with *"Everyone in the world has gone to bed at night with the fear or pain of loss . . . "*

As she says, *"Within every human being there is the nobleness of the human spirit, despite it all, black and white, pretty, plain, thin, fat,"* fade down as vocals to "Dare You" begin to lift up. Let the lyrics of the song speak for themselves.

Your riders have been standing up to now.

Have them drop back down to the saddle, listen, and refresh.

Find a welcoming seated climb.

Fears have been dealt with; it's time to move forward.

We'll add resistance here and work it UP!

Move them to a standing climb as the chorus builds up at 1:40 in the song.

(Times depend upon your music edits with the added speech excerpt.)

Increase resistance at 2:10.

Drop back to the saddle at 2:40.

*In your mind I want you to begin to **change your thinking:***

*Go from "What is the worst thing that could happen to me?" to "What is the **BEST THING** that could happen to me?"*

Take it back to a standing climb at 3:14 with more gear.

And you take that "best thing" and begin to share it with friends and loved ones, and as a result, they JOIN THIS JOURNEY of COURAGE with you.

We Gain Courage with Loved Ones Coming Along

12. Sky Full of Stars, Coldplay, (Nathan C Bootleg Remix), 0:05 – 5:30

+ Maya Angelou Excerpt #3 and #4

(The total song length as purchased is 5:38.)

(*Google search this version of Coldplay's popular song. You can find a free download on many sites, and it is worth the extra search for this version.)

For this song, you will want to start the third Maya Angelou excerpt 15 seconds into the song's intro: *"Love is the condition so powerful it may be that which holds the stars in the firmament, that which pushes courage. You have to have courage to love somebody because you risk everything, every THING."* Vocals start immediately at the end of this sound clip.

Back off here to a comfortable climb. Stay in the saddle.

Think for a minute of those people in your life that have walked a road of courage with you in the past. Who are they? Where are they?

IMPORTANT MOMENT: I took the opportunity during this song to walk the room of cyclists and point out friends from as little as a few weeks to 10+ years, and the impact they each have had and continue to have on me. Especially one very special friend that was there, who at a pivotal time in my life stayed beside me and did not turn her back, but chose to walk alongside. Find ways to connect with those present—it will remind them they are not alone. You are with them. And the other riders are there as well. The feeling of isolation is one of the biggest contributors to fear.

Through our relationships, you begin to see that “Love liberates” . . .

As the song vocals wind down at about 5:00, you will overlay Maya Angelou's excerpt #4, in which she says, “*I am grateful to have been loved, and to be loved now, and to be able to love . . . love liberates, it doesn't just hold. That's ego. Love liberates.*”

Courage Brings Liberation

13. Safe and Sound, Capital Cities (Cash Cash Remix), Ultra Dance 15, 2:17 – 4:20
(The total song length as purchased is 5:06. Fade into the song at 2:17.)

Bring the resistance back up and increase the work effort, because we believe we have the courage and the support to accomplish a change in our lives.

Intersperse these comments with the ebb and flow of the song. You are reemphasizing how we gain courage.

*We gain courage by **feeling safe in our surroundings.***

*We gain courage when we **know our possibilities.***

*We gain courage when we **truly listen to our heartstrings that pull on us.***

We gain courage and feel safe . . .

*When those **friends** begin to **influence, encourage, and affirm us.***

We Feel Safe. We Believe the Dream

14. Believe It, Spencer & Hill & Nadia Ali (Cazette Radio Edit), Believe It EP, 0:30 – 3:34
(The total song length as purchased is 3:24.)

Again, the music itself will speak to your riders here; let them get into it at their pace. Establish a moderate climb. Use your cueing according to the rise/fall of the music.

We begin to recognize fear is not always so bad in itself.

*Whether good or bad, fear triggers us that something **important** is going to happen!*

*It calls us to **PAY ATTENTION!***

*Still recognize those fears? Use them to **fuel your passion!***

Be determined to not stop believing in what you are passionate about.

Continue the above mindset into the next song.

15. Don't Stop Believing (Felix Voy Extended Mix), Journey 2:46 – 7:15**(The total song length as purchased is 9:20.)**

(*Google this version of Journey's popular song; you can find a free download on many sites and it is worth the extra search for this version.)

Keep your riders thinking of that “*BEST THING THAT CAN HAPPEN!*” mindset; not the typical, “*Well, what's the worst that can happen?*”

Keep them on a steady work pace/climb here, alternating in and out of saddle.

At 4:16 into this song . . .

There is only now.

This is the only life we have, as clichéd as that seems!

This life is the only thing that is REAL

RIGHT NOW is the only moment you are guaranteed.

It all happens in the now.

You're already the oldest you've ever been—and then it's already gone!

LET THIS BE A SIGN TO START LIVING COURAGEOUSLY.

It's time to start creating your life as you want it to be.

*And believe you have it **WITHIN** you!*

Do you ever get rid of all the fear?! NO!

But you act anyway.

Even the most courageous moves are most often made on wobbly legs! (Paraphrased from Nietzsche.)

*Let's take those legs to **WOBBLY!***

At 6:40, say:

Go for it—attack this hill.

16. A Hero Will Rise, Future World Music, A Hero Will Rise, 0:02 – 3:45

+ Maya Angelou Excerpt #5

(The total song length as purchased is 3:52.)

For this song, start the excerpted Maya Angelou speech at 40 seconds into the song. The excerpt is 90 seconds. The orchestration will build to a climax at 2:48, which is when the sound clip fades out.

“Sister, you know what's right, just do right. You don't have to ask anybody the truth . . . Try to be all you can be. The best human being you can be. In your church, temple, classroom, because it is right to do . . . People will add prayers to your life . . . Live your life in a way that you will not regret . . . Take up the battle . . . This is yours . . . Try it. See. Pick it up! Pick up the battle and make it a better world. Just where you are. It can be better, it must be better, but it is up to us!”

Relax your riders as this song begins; there will be a definitive change in emotion. This song is when you'll have them turn over the sheet and reveal Maya's words. Make sure everyone has their clipboards back in their hands or on the bike. You may have to walk around the room to hand anybody their board that was set on the floor. As you walk around, tell them:

Relax, listen, focus.

Return your attention to your clipboard.

Pedal with ease, and REALLY LISTEN here (to the sound clip).

At 2:06, as she is speaking, tell them:

Fold your card in half and look at the back side.

It will reveal the rest of the speech as Maya Angelou is speaking it. (This makes a great handout for them to take with them after class.)

At 3:10 pick up the pace they've been riding at and say:

*Imagine yourself coming out of the forest
you've been hiding in.*

Nothing will stop you as you run to the life you desire.

Runnnnnnnnnnnn towards that desired life—a nice output of energy.

And now let's just have some fun as we imagine this new life!



17. Raging Fire, Phillip Phillips, Behind the Light, 0:48 – 3:55

(Cut out the beginning slow part of the song.)

Continue to encourage your riders here to burn with passion—uncontrollable passion to accomplish what they've written down on their cards. The music will speak for itself here. Keep the pace quick and the intensity high. No need to talk much during this segment of the ride.

The song will end quickly with the following excerpt of Maya speaking to close the ride:

Closing Speech

18. Maya Angelou Excerpt #6 (no music, only voice clip)

No words need to be said here. Let her speech resonate with your riders. It is a very emotional speech about her gratitude for life. You may not have many dry eyes in your studio.

“It still humbles me that this force which made leaves and fleas and stars and rivers and . . . and you. Loves me. Me. Maya Angelou. It’s amazing! I can do

anything. And do it well. Any good thing, I can do it. That's why I am who I am.
Yes, because God loves me. And I'm amazed at it. And grateful for it."

Closing and Cool-Down

17. True North, Jillette Johnson, Water in a Whale, 0:10 – 3:30

As you close the ride, take the card that you as the leader have completed (and folded over in half with them) just to let them know that you did this exercise too. (You don't have to read it to them.)

Remind them that they have each made a decision today . . .

*I've done this exercise along with you.
Whatever you wrote down on this card today,
My hope is that it becomes more than a thought or a statement.
That it moves from your head to your heart.
From your heart to your hands.
And feet that will move you forward
Into the courageous and energized life you so desire.*

Thank them for riding with you today.

Continue to cool down during this song.

Invite them to stretch with you after the ride.

I found that most people really wanted to go to their own space and ponder.

Maya's courage: video clips (to be converted as sound bites; edits noted.)**EXCERPT #1****Maya Angelou On Courage**, 0:00 – 0:53<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SmbWrff-RFA>

“Courage is the most important of all the virtues. Because without courage you cannot practice any other virtue consistently. You can be anything erratically. You can be kind, fair, true, generous, just, merciful, all of those things every now and again. But to be that thing consistently you have to have courage. So, you build your courage muscle by being courageous just in small things, so I believe you learn in small ways to develop courage. You say, ‘Hello’ to people who don’t look like you. Just do right.”

EXCERPT #2**Maya Angelou On Fear**, 0:00 – 0:35<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PgKu3tUPIKo>

“Everyone in the world has gone to bed one night or another with fear, pain or loss. Or disappointment. And yet, each one of us has awakened arisen. Somehow made our ablutions. Seen other human beings and said, ‘Morning, how are you?’ ‘Fine, thanks and you?’ It is amazing. Wherever that abides in the human being there is the nobleness of the human spirit. Despite it all - black and white, Asian, Spanish, Native American, pretty, plain, thin, fat . . .”
(fade out here, before Maya Angelou begins her reading of ‘Still I Rise’)

EXCERPT #3**Maya Angelou, On Courage and Love** 0:00 – 0:21<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pVqr6MDdOHc>

“I attribute it to love. Love is a condition so powerful it may be that which holds the stars in the firmament. It may be that which pushes and urges the blood in the veins. Courage. You have to have courage to love somebody. Because you risk everything. Every thing.”

EXCERPT #4**Maya Angelou, Love Liberates**, 0:00 – 0:21<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cbecKv2xR14>

I am grateful to have been loved and to be loved now. And to be able to love. Because that liberates. Love liberates. It doesn’t just hold. That’s ego. Love liberates.

EXCERPT #5**Maya Angelou, Hero Within**, 1:53 – 3:22http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bxrV2J_OjGo

“Try to be all you can be. To be the best human being you can be. Try to be that in your church, in your temple. Try to be that in your classroom. Do it because it is right to do. And see, people will know you and they will add their prayers to your life. They’ll wish you well. I think, if your name is mentioned and people say, “Oh Hell,” or “Oh, Damn” (laughs)

honey, you're doing something wrong! But if your name is mentioned and people say 'She's so sweet, he's so nice, I love her, oh, God bless her.' There you are! So try to live your life in a way that you will not regret years of useless virtue and inertia and timidity. Take up the battle. Take it up. It's yours. This is your life. This is your world. I'll be leaving it long before you end the ordinary set of circumstances. You make your own choices. You can decide life isn't worth living. That would be the worse thing you could do. How do you know? So far? Try it. See. So, pick it up. Pick up the battle and make it a better world, just where you are. Yes, and it can be better. It must be better. But it is up to us.

EXCERPT #6**Maya Angelou, Because God Loves Me, 2:15 – 2:54**<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gwuAntPHGVM>

"It still humbles me that this force which made leaves and fleas and stars and rivers and . . . and you. Loves me. Me. Maya Angelou. It's amazing! I can do anything. And do it well. Any good thing, I can do it. That's why I am who I am. Yes, because God loves me. And I'm amazed at it. And grateful for it."