

The Follow-up

Hi everyone,

The response to this was overwhelming. Many incredible ideas mixed with connection, joy, humor, and so many other things. I couldn't be more grateful -- thank you so much. Here's the [list](#). For those that haven't sent something and feel bad about it -- please don't! I'm happy to add ideas any time as you think of them -- this list is going to be used far beyond the end of the year! And the purpose of it was to bring joy, not distress, so no worries if it didn't work out that way. (an aside: isn't that crazy how we judge ourselves so harshly?! the world needs a lot less of that.)

One of the things I observed is that some of the ideas were a mini-Rorschach-like reflection of what people value. So it wasn't just the nice notes, but also how the ideas remind me so much of you.

Some of my favorite reactions:

- "I turn 65 in January. Please share the list with me." (many people were eager to see the list, but I thought proxying for other soon-to-be 65-year-olds was great)
- "What a fantastic idea! I love Sara!" (Sara is the person who suggested the idea in the first place)
- "What a great idea! I'm gonna steal it :)"
- "I'm honored to be on this list." Oh, my. How magical is life that someone would say that to me?
- The friendly competitiveness it drew from people in various forms (just gotta say to those of you who aren't at this milestone in life yet: I don't feel the slightest bit of "I should do your idea to make you feel good" sentiment, and I suspect you'll feel the same when you reach this point. Too many miles on these tires!).

Several people have asked me how I am going to decide which to do, and...which am I going to do?! To be honest, I haven't figured either out -- the work to just assemble them and respond to everyone has been a bit consuming. I've noticed several immediate reactions I've had when I read them:

- the "oh, yeah!": I'm *definitely* going to do that! ("Make a self-portrait and use the portrait as a way to express something nameable or unnamable about yourself.")
- the inverse: definitely not doing that! ("Visit a favela in Brazil and distribute disposal cameras to kids")
- the uncomfortable curiosity: yikes, that's a great idea...could I get myself to do that? (posting videos of myself on Tiktok)
- the combo: oh, those two together will be a very cool combination (produce a photograph in a style you've never done before, combined with several other photo ideas)

I promised to keep people updated on my progress at least weekly through the end of the year. Seems like Instagram is the tool for that, though posting on social media makes me squeamish. Stay tuned.

Thanks so much for being in my life.

Steve

The Invitation

Hi,

I'm approaching my 65th birthday. Hard to believe. Not without its disadvantages, but truly glorious at the same time. But how should I celebrate it?

Sara, a wonderfully creative friend, had this suggestion: solicit ideas from meaningful people in my life for something I can do each day between my birthday, October 26, and the end of the year. Which, remarkably, is 65 days. Of course, it made me uncomfortable, so I ran the idea by several people and everyone loved it! So now I do, too :-). And here we are.

RSVP to this email with your ideas. No limit or deadline. I'll post the ideas (preserving anonymity -- no worries!) in a shared doc, along with a little update week by week on each one I do as I proceed through the end of the year.

You've already thought of a devilish one, perhaps. Or a touching one. Or something funny. Or edgy. You know I love to read, photography, music, travel, movies, and people. I love to be moved, to connect, and to laugh. All are welcome, send them along! One friend asked "What are the limits? How about "read the whole bible"?" (devilish, but not going to happen). I get to pick the ones I choose to do, and being practical is going to be an important criterion. Doing one idea each day is my goal.

I began compiling a list of people to send this invitation to and I discovered that forming the list was a remarkably touching gift. You all have meant so much to me and I'm deeply moved to have shared so much with you over the years. I am deeply grateful. And I look forward to continuing!

Let's start celebrating!

Best,

Steve

