A photograph showing a circle of ten hands, five on each side, reaching towards the center. The hands are of various skin tones and are positioned as if they are about to clasp each other. The background is a soft, out-of-focus gradient of light green and yellow, suggesting a bright, sunny environment. The overall mood is one of unity, support, and positivity.

Gratitude experiment: letter to my uncle

Dear uncle Juan,

although you might not know, you've been one of the most influential persons in my life, and I wanted to take this time to tell you how grateful I am for that. Thank you for serving as a role model in life, teaching me that there is no real definition of success and no "right" way in life. For a very long time you have been a role model for me, someone who has gained thousands of diplomas and awards, gone to one of the most prestigious universities, and yet, there is much more to you than that, beyond a man with so many "accomplishments" you are incredibly humble and real.



There is no doubt that you are a “successful” person, and still, you never judge other’s definitions of success, and even though you’ve taken a correct path in life, you taught me that there is no true “correct” path in life. Walking in the streets with you I've noticed that you have respect for all people, those who work in the streets, in restaurants and public places, after all, it does not matter that your definition of success is different than theirs. In the end, if one’s definition of success is settling down, and forming a family, it’s is okay, or if it is working hard to gain diplomas and titles, that is okay too, as long as it makes you happy, for which no one has a superior definition of success.



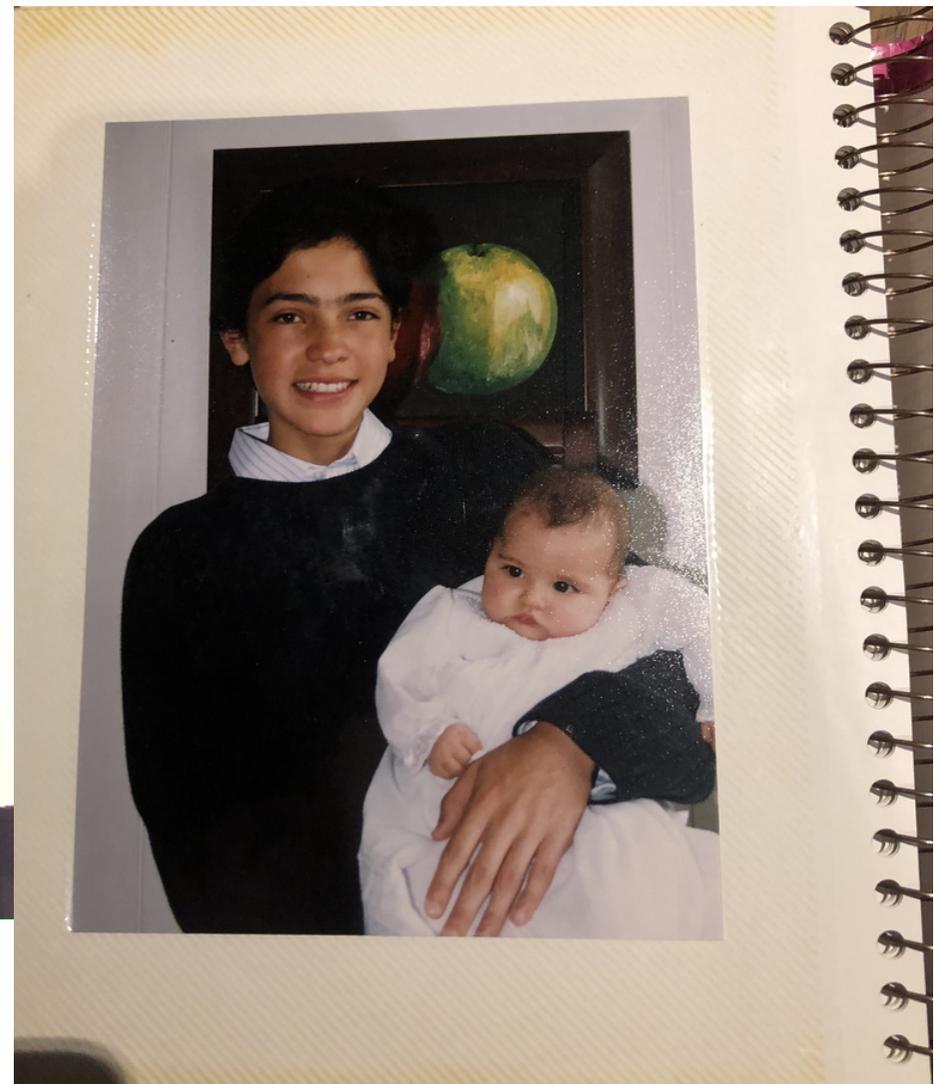
I tell you this because for a long time my definition of you was a man with many “accomplishments” when in reality you are so much more than that, and I am thankful for having you as an uncle, a role model, and a friend.

There are many other ways in which you've influenced my life, from your love for animals to the way you live. Recently you've said you wanted to live a more simple life, which is something that made me reflect, it is a way of saying that you aren't worrying about what you want, but enjoying what you have, because in the end what is the point of having more if it is not making you live truly better?



Overall, all I can say is that I am incredibly grateful for everything you've taught me, not many people have the opportunity to have a 16 years older uncle, you've influenced me so much, it is hard to condense it in a short letter, and I feel privileged for having you in my life.

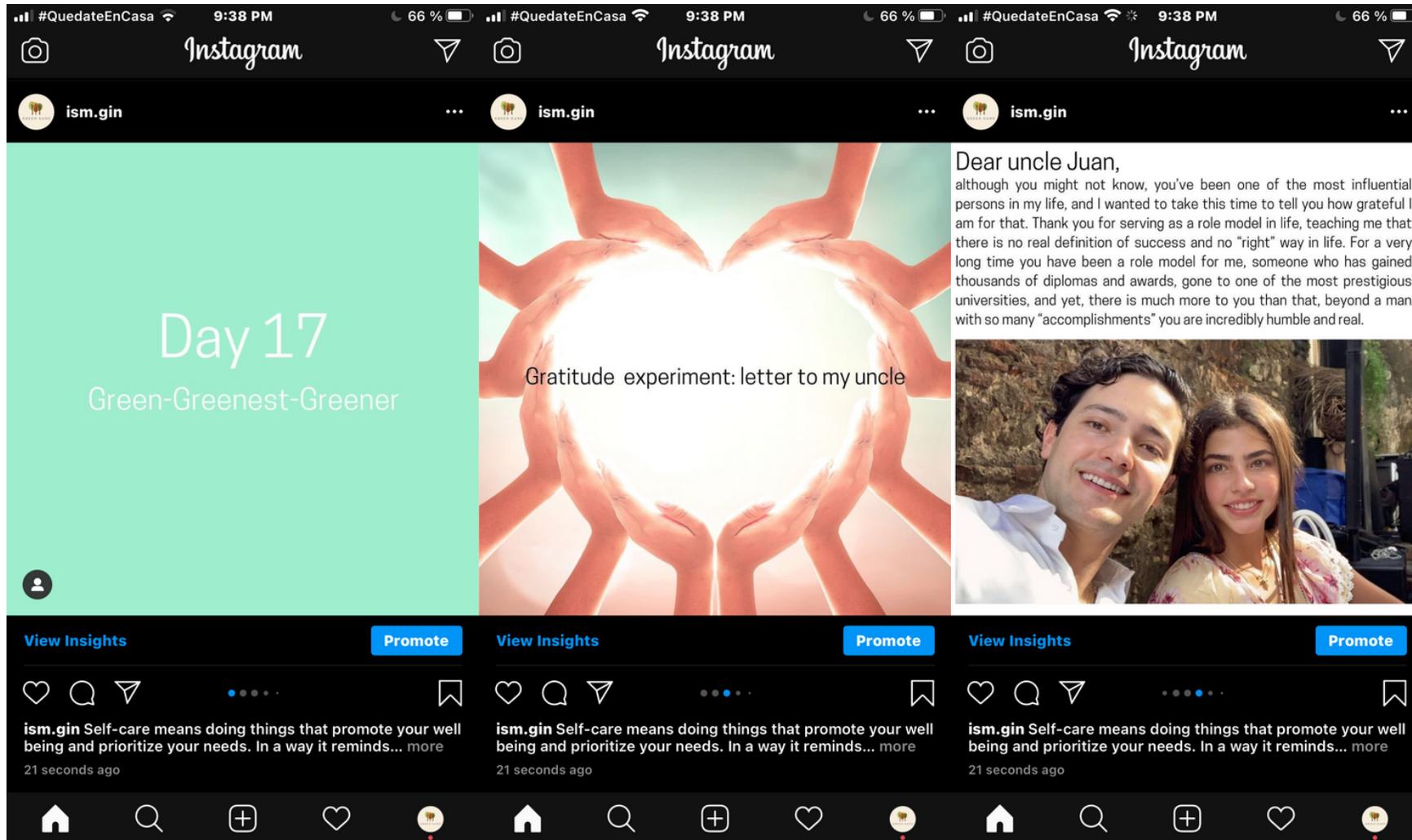
Te Quiero mucho,
Nana.





Reflections and response: Writing the letter was quite emotional for me, specially realizing how I had never been able to express how valuable my uncle was for me. Thinking about our past, made me nostalgic about being so far away now. Within he's response, he told me I made his day, and inspired him to write another letter. At the end you never really know what someone is going through and a message of gratitude telling them how much you love them might mean the world to them. Over all this exercise made me very nostalgic and emotional, about how important it is to analyze how much someone means to you, for both people involved. A big part of who we are is the product of the influence of others, and acknowledging that is very powerful.

INSTAGRAM POSTS



+image of all parts of letter

Caption: Self-care means doing things that promote your well being and prioritize your needs. In a way it reminds us that we are worth taking care of, and many times it ends up doing much more than just taking care of one aspect of yourself, it can even be a way of doing mindfulness, simply disconnecting from reality, to do something for yourself.