



# Even Simple Invitations Matter

By [Charles Vogl](#)



Just this morning, I reached out to many friends to invite them to dinner at our house tomorrow night.

Of course, most people with active lives have their weekend plans already set. So I knew that at least some, if not most, would decline. That's exactly what happened. No matter, I reached out all the same.

Over the years I've learned that invitations matter. Invitations — even unaccepted, even unacknowledged — are an important tool in our efforts to build community. Invitations are evidence to others that someone cares about them.

Our dinner party tomorrow will consist of about 14 people. I've already noticed my anxiety rising as I wonder whether I can make it nice enough or impressive enough, given my own schedule tomorrow. Which means I get to remind myself that the relationships are far more important than the food I serve. I get to remind myself

that my friends are looking forward to a welcoming space more than to culinary genius.

I'll make a simple meal of ginger chicken, garlic greens, and brown rice. It is a classic Asian-American home dinner. I'll trust that if they want to know us, this will be a perfect meal for them.

As you focus on how to grow or strengthen your community, think about who you are inviting into your space, and please put aside all your concerns about impressing them... even if you struggle with this like me.

For years we did not have a home that could host 14 people. You may lack a recipe for ginger chicken. No matter, we all want a genuine welcome far more than an impressive buffet.

There is no reason to wait in offering the welcome to others. They may be busy with their lives. Whoever accepts, wants to spend time with you. They may be the best kind of people to host.

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