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The Philosophy of Ikigai and Finding Purpose

While, we approach the end of yet another year and look at all those well-intentioned but lofty New Year's resolutions that we made at the start of this year, there's no better time than now to refocus our spirits and really plan out our hopes and goals for the future.

Though the "new year, new me" cliché is motivating, the truth is that if the only thing motivating us to improve is a new number on the calendar, there may be a better approach to thoroughly enjoy everything life has in store for us.

Enter Ikigai, a centuries-old Japanese philosophy connected to the country's long-life expectancy. Your ikigai is simply what gets you up in the morning and keeps you going.

The Japanese consider that everyone has an ikigai or a cause to get out of bed every day. Discovering it, according to the citizens of Okinawa, Japan's largest island and home to the world's longest-lived community, is the secret to living a longer and more fulfilling life.



Source: ikigailiving.uk.co

1. WHAT DOES IKIGAI MEAN?

"Ikigai is what gets you up every morning and keeps you going."

Ikigai is a Japanese concept that means your 'reason for being'. "Iki" (生き), in Japanese means 'life,' and 'gai' (甲斐), describes value or worth. Your ikigai is your life purpose or your bliss. It's what brings you joy and inspires you to get out of bed every day.

The origin of the work Ikigai goes back to the Heian period. Clinical psychologist and avid expert of the Ikigai evolution, Akihiro Hasegawa released a research paper in 2001 where he wrote that the word 'gai' comes from the word 'kai' which translates to shell in Japanese.

Gai is the key to finding your purpose, or value in life. The best way to really encapsulate the overarching ideology of Ikigai is by looking at the ikigai Venn diagram which displays the overlapping four main qualities: what you are good at, what the world needs, what you can be paid for and of course what you love.

1.1 WHAT YOU LOVE?

This sphere covers what we do or experience that brings us the most joy in life and makes us

feel more alive and fulfilled. What we enjoy in this sense can be playing sports, to listen songs, writing poetry, climbing mountains, singing in a rock band, reading historical novels, spending free time with friends, and so on.

What is important is that we allow ourselves to think deeply about what we love and discover something that we never knew. This thinking is done without any concern for whether we are good at it, the world needs it or whether we are going to get paid for it.

1.2 WHAT YOU ARE GOOD AT?

This area includes everything that you are particularly good at, such as skills you have acquired, hobbies you have pursued, and talents you have shown since an early age, and so on. What you are good at could be, for example, playing the piano, empathizing, public speaking, playing sports, or drawing portraits.

This sphere encompasses talents and capabilities, whether they are our passion, whether the world needs them or whether we will get paid for it.

1.3 WHAT THE WORLD NEEDS?

The "World" here could be all of humanity, a small community you're dealing with, or something in between. What the world needs may be based on your impressions, or the needs expressed by others. The world needs could include skilled nursing care, clean water, home heating, Election Day volunteers, or better police training. This area of ikigai connects most clearly and benefits others beyond their own needs.

This sphere connects us to other people and being altruistic.

1.4 WHAT YOU CAN GET PAID FOR?

This dimension of the chart is also relevant to the world or society, as it includes things that someone else is willing to pay you, or "market bears". You may be passionate about writing poetry or very good at climbing, but that doesn't necessarily mean you can get paid to do it. Whether you can be rewarded for your passion or talent depends on factors such as your economy and whether your passion or talent is sought after.

"[I]f you can find pleasure and satisfaction in what you do and you're good at it, congratulations you have found your ikigai."

2. WHY IS IKIGAI IMPORTANT?

Many sociologists, scientists and journalists have researched and hypothesized the usefulness of this concept. One of them being that ikigai makes your life longer and with more direction. Japan is ranked second in the world for life expectancy, with women expected to live 88.09 years and men expected to live 81.91 years. Apart from living a longer and happier life knowing your ikigai can you in various aspects of your life like, designing your ideal work lifestyle, creating strong social connections at work, creating a healthy work-life balance, helps in pursuing your career dreams, enjoying our work and many more. When you know your ikigai and understand its meaning, you are aligned with the work you have longed to do.

3. HOW DO WE DISCOVER OUR IKIGAI?



Source: Forbes.com

Ikigai is personal and specific to each of us, representing where our mission, vocation, and professional lives meet.

THE IKIGAI TEST:

How to find your ikigai, true purpose & what lights you up?

Your ikigai is said to lie at the center of these interconnecting circles.

Mission: What you love?

How to find what you love?

- What is the most important to you in life?
- What are your values and how do you use them every day?
- Who are the people you love spending time with?
- What is your goal in life?
- What makes you smile?

Vocation: What the world needs?

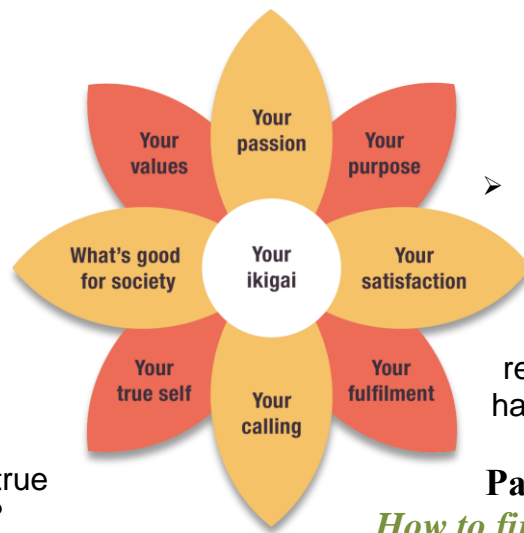
How to find what the world needs?

- How do you help others?
- What could people do more/differently?
- What is the world lacking?
- What will you leave behind you?
- How could you be more involved in your community?

Profession: What you can get paid for?

How to find what you can be paid for?

- How much money do you need per month to cover your needs?
- What would you do with more money?
- What type of employment would you want: part-time or full-time? Temporary or permanent? Employee, freelance, or business owner?



Source: Japan.travel

- What work environment would you be happier in: working from home, having your own office, or in an open space?

- What are the jobs that require the skills you already have? (See “what you are good at”)

Passion: What you're good at?

How to find what you are good at?

- What activities do you do in your personal time?
- What is easy for you?
- What are your achievements?
- What do you enjoy doing the most in life?
- What are your strengths?

“The idea being you find life fulfilment and happiness by connecting all four pieces together.”

4. HOW DO WE TRANSFORM OUR OUTLOOK?

Many of us struggle to find our true potential and live a full life but pursuing ikigai in the workplace might seem like an unrealistic approach in life. But if we really know about our passion, we can direct it towards making a living out of it and if you have a positive approach towards work, you will eventually have a grateful outlook towards life and knowingly unknowingly you will do things which are useful for society on a small scale, it's like if you want to change the world start by making your own bed.

If you really want to tap into your ikigai know your skills that will eventually let you know what you are passionate about and even if it doesn't work for you try to break your comfort zone so that you can get a clear idea about what you are good at. It's like trial-and-error method because most of us don't know who they are and what we are good at.

Ikigai is a very beautiful concept but at the same time it is a very niche concept only a handful of people will be able to tap into their ikigai. So let us all try to tap into our ikigai through consistence in our life.

5. HOW DO WE GET HAPPINESS FROM IKIGAI?

What's our biggest aspiration in life?

It doesn't matter whether we're talking about personal or career success. Our greatest aspiration remains the same. We all strive for happiness in life and work. When you work towards your ikigai, you don't lose that wish for happiness. In fact, you become more aware of it. You understand what being happy truly means, and you start seeking that persistent state of fulfilment. When you find that answer, you'll eventually discover the ultimate happiness in life.

You discover your purpose of being, or your ikigai. When you find your ikigai, you not only satisfy your desires, but also fulfil what the world needs as well.

Some points that will help us stay happy and fruitful with ikigai are:

- ✓ Make it so that you like what you do.
- ✓ Meditate in movement.
- ✓ Make room for your ikigai.
- ✓ Differentiate urgent things from important things.
- ✓ Don't take on obligations during your free time.
- ✓ Follow some type of digital diet.
- ✓ Follow your passions.

6. HOW TO ACHIEVE HAPPINESS FROM IKIGAI?

While on the path of achieving happiness from Ikigai, a question you can ask yourself is, "What rules can I easily implement that will help me with my day-to-day life?"

10 rules of Ikigai to live a happy and healthier life are:

- ✓ Stay active; don't retire
- ✓ Get in shape
- ✓ Live in the moment
- ✓ Reconnect with nature
- ✓ Smile
- ✓ Take it slow
- ✓ Surround yourself with good friends
- ✓ Give thanks
- ✓ Fill your stomach 80%
- ✓ Follow your Ikigai

If all of this feels a bit too set in stone and you're having problems committing, don't worry; study has shown that, like music taste, fashion, and opinions, a person's ikigai can change and morph with age, so they'll probably require a semi-annual checkup. Takeshi no Katei no igaku's characters had all chosen new activities after retiring. If that doesn't demonstrate that it's never too late to start enjoying life, we don't make sure what does.

Perhaps it's time to refocus your new year's resolutions in 2022 and embrace the bigger picture: discovering your ikigai.

NEWS SNIPPETS- NOVEMBER 2021

Skies darken for Indian IPOs after Paytm's disappointing debut- Paytm's dismal stock market debut is likely to put a damper on future offerings after the IPO of the digital payments firm ranked among the worst-performing in Indian history,

IndiGo largest airline by capacity in APAC & 10th largest airline globally: OAG- IndiGo has emerged as the tenth largest airline globally and the largest in

Asia Pacific by seat volume, According to UK- based air consultancy firm OAG

Tesla India buys Portable Inverters from Noida based Startup Oxy Neuron- Tesla India has placed a bulk order for buying portable inverters from a Noida-based startup Oxy Neuron India Pvt. Ltd. Oxy Neuron incubated at the Startup Incubation and Innovation Centre (SIIC), IIT Kanpur. The company has developed a Smart Lithium wall mount portable inverter named 'Magic Box'. Oxy Neuron claims that these inverters are 94% more efficient than conventional inverters. These inverters are compatible with solar panels, and can also be used for charging EVs. The price starts at INR 25,000 and comes in 1 KW, 2 KW and 3 KW capacities.

Yes Bank partners Amazon Pay for UPI, chooses AWS for payment processing- Bank has partnered with Amazon Pay and AWS to offer UPI payment to users. In FY21, Yes Bank recorded a market share of around 40% by volume in the UPI ecosystem and around 30% by volume in the UPI merchant acquiring business thanks to the integration with PhonePe. The integration with Amazon Pay will enable the US e-commerce giant, which is a late entrant into the payment space, to issue UPI IDs with the @yapl handle. The tie-up will further expand Yes Bank's presence in UPI with its payment processing platform hosted on AWS

Tata Steel Q2 net profit jumps manifold to Rs 12,547 crore- Domestic steel giant Tata Steel on Thursday said its consolidated net profit jumped manifold to Rs 12,547.70 crore in the July-September quarter of 2021-22, helped by higher income. The company's net profit was at Rs 1,665.07 crore in the corresponding quarter of the previous financial year, Tata Steel said in a BSE filing.

Hong Kong reports 4 new imported COVID-19 cases- The new Covid-19 variant, B.1.1.529, detected in South Africa is mainly affecting people in the under 25 age group, among whom the vaccination rate against the virus is only 26%, according to health officials. The South African news outlet reported that

with Gauteng emerging as the epicenter of the fourth wave of the pandemic once again, it's no surprise that the province has recorded the most number of infections from the B.1.1.529 variant. Hong Kong also detected the new COVID-19 variant in people with a travel history to South Africa. Germany and Italy have banned fliers from South Africa over the concerns regarding this new Covid variant. Fear grips the streets in Botswana following new Covid strain outbreak. Indian Government announces tighter testing standards for all fliers. No reports have been reported as of yet. Singapore restricts travelers from seven African countries hit by new coronavirus variant.

Government to change tax laws in budget to tax cryptocurrency gains- The government is mulling changes in the income tax laws to bring cryptocurrencies under the tax net, with some changes that could form part of the budget next year, a top official said. Revenue secretary Tarun Bajaj said that in terms of income tax, some people are already paying capital gains tax on the income from cryptocurrency, and in respect of goods and services tax (GST) also the law is "very clear" that the rate would be applicable as those in case of other services. The RBI has repeatedly reiterated its strong views against cryptocurrencies saying they pose serious threats to the macroeconomic and financial stability of the country and also doubted the number of investors trading on them as well as their claimed market value.

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