

30 Day Ikigai Challenge

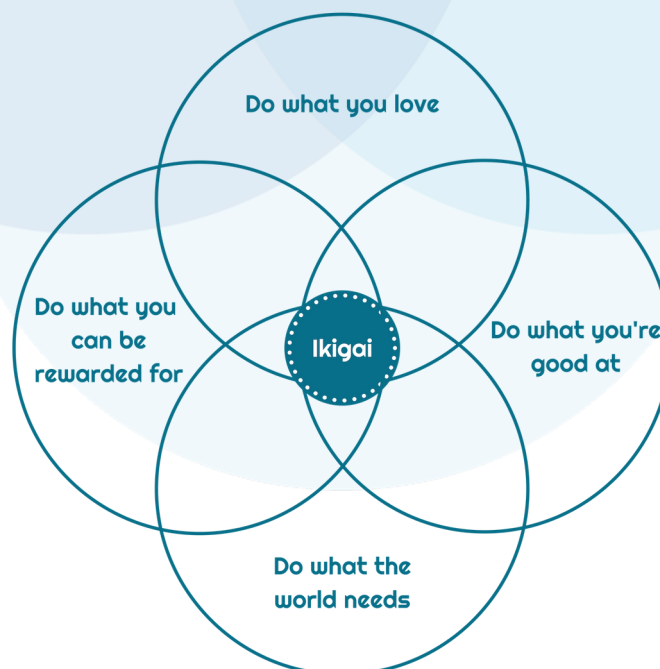
"Take your pleasure seriously" - Charles Eames

Introduction:

If you're like most people, you have a difficult time understanding what brings you meaning each day. Personal meaning and purpose are challenging things for each of us to figure out.

But there's a little place situated on the edge of the Pacific ocean and the East China sea where the practice of daily meaning has been an important part of life for two thousand years. It's Okinawa, Japan.

That's where they practice Ikigai. Ikigai means *life's worth*. Ikigai is the reason you get excited about waking up each day. Ikigai comes with a map. The map has four steps:



Step One: Explore

Step one is to Explore.

This step will take up the majority of the next 30 days. For the next three weeks your work is to EXPLORE YOUR EVERY DESIRE.

This step is all about getting to know yourself better. It's about doing the things that you've been wondering about all your life.

Take your pleasure seriously! You will start by making a list. Make a list of all the things you've always been interested in. Music, Water colours, cooking, volunteerism, travel, making new friends, working with your hands, pottery, dogs or cats, sports, fitness. Consider everything that fascinates you and put it on the list.

If you can't invest an hour into making a list of everything that you love then tomorrow you'll have exactly the same thing you have today.

Be specific. Write each fascination and interest onto it's own post it note and stick it to the wall.

Be exhaustive about this list. You're making a vision wall.

For the next 21 days, do as many of these things as you can. Start by doing the one thing that you're most excited about first.

Your work for the next three weeks is to gather intuitive and practical information about what brings you joy. Studies show that effective decision making comes from balancing too little information with too much information. Exploring will help you gather input and evidence about what works for you and what doesn't.

As you dive into your passions and start doing them one by one move the completed items to a separate area on the wall. This is your “Did it” list.

EXPLORE Recap:

Your work for the next three weeks is going to EXPLORE ALL THE THINGS that fascinate you. Enjoy yourself to the fullest! I hope the next twenty one days are the most thrilling of your lifetime. Go explore! At the end of your three weeks you'll be ready for the next step.

Step Two: Zero In

Step two will require one day of work. Your task on day 22 is to ZERO IN on what purpose feels like to you.

Your past three weeks of exploring has provided you with a treasure trove of information about yourself. Take a look at all the activities you accomplished.

What was most thrilling? What was your least favourite? Was there anything that surprised you? What would you do any specific thing again? What pleasure could you take more seriously?

Keep your favourite things on the wall. Remove everything else.

Now **write a story** for each item that is still up on the wall. Write about what happened and what you felt as you were doing this activity. Write in the most free flow way possible. Don't worry about spelling or neatness. Just write about the feelings, what you noticed or how it lifted you.

Write one story for each post it note that is left on the wall. Take as long as you like but at the end of day 22 you'll have zero'd in on a few special things that thrill you.

What's the common thread? What keeps popping up over and over? Is there a word or a phrase that resonates with you?

ZERO IN Recap:

Write your stories. Leave your post it notes on the wall and put your stories somewhere safe. You're about to start Phase three where you will put the most powerful part of your brain to work on your behalf.

Step Three: Ponder

The third step of the Ikigai 30 day purpose challenge is to PONDER.

You've spent 21 days exploring. On the 22nd day you've taken the important step of zeroing in on what actions seem to give the most purpose. Now, you're going to take the third step. You'll stop thinking and stop doing.

This step is about moving away from everything so that your subconscious can work on your behalf. Walk away from your vision wall and your stories. In fact, stop any and all work on your Ikigai all together.

For the next six days take walks by yourself and look at the trees. Take yourself to a movie and eat popcorn and M&M's. Go to the coffee shop. Your work is to PONDER. Do NOT think about anything specifically but keep your vision wall in the back of your mind.

Soak in a hot tub. Find a chair in the sunshine. Meditate. Don't think. Instead pay attention to what your mind magically reveals to you. According to neuroscience your subconscious mind is a super computer. It has a million times the capacity for processing information and learning compared to what your conscious mind can do.



Stop thinking about your purpose. Simply exist for the next six days. Pay attention to what comes to mind.

If something profound comes to your attention, NO MATTER WHAT TIME OF THE DAY, make a note of it and put it on a post it note. Stick it to your vision wall.

PONDER Recap:

Your work for six days is to PONDER. You will quietly weigh your exploration, actions, joys and thoughts for six days. This step is all about allowing your subconscious to help you unearth what your ikigai is.

Your Ikigai is an action. Ponder a word that describes the action that consistently brings you joy. Your Ikigai is a verb. It starts with "To...". For example:

- To serve
- To create
- To nourish
- To provide
- To teach
- To heal
- To connect
- To build
- To lead
- To support
- To coach

Do any of the above Ikigai actions resonate with you? If one does, pay attention to it. Follow it. Take action. The only way you will realize your life's worth is to take action consistently. Ikigai today. Come back tomorrow.



After you explore, zero in and ponder for 30 days you will have a much better understanding of what gives you purpose. It seems like a lot of work but you're worth it.

Ikigai / life purpose / well-being is a life-long adventure that requires energy and action everyday.

I hope for you with this 30 day Ikigai challenge. I hope that you continue to:

Do what you love

Do what you're good at

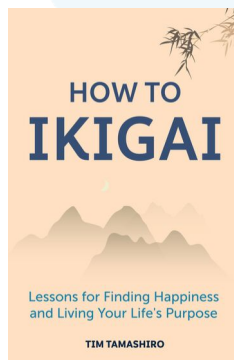
Do what the world needs

Do what you can be rewarded for

Your ikigai is an action that you can do at anytime / any day that will bring joy to you and to others. What is your Ikigai?

My Ikigai is:

I hope you've enjoyed taking the 30 Day Ikigai Challenge. If you'd like more information about How To Ikigai you can pick up a copy of my book on Amazon!



BONUS: See next page for your fridge poster. Print out and stick it to your fridge for a daily reminder to "Do More You!"

