

FINDING YOUR IKIGAI

Ikigai is a Japanese term that roughly translates to "reason for being." Finding your ikigai is an exercise in finding your bliss--the happy intersection of where your life purpose and passions meet the needs of society. It's how you make a difference in the world while living happily and abundantly.

Your ikigai lies at the center of four simple directions:

1. Do what you love.
2. Do what you're good at.
3. Do what the world needs.
4. Do what you can be rewarded for.

In this exercise, we'll walk through each of these four directions to help you understand your ikigai.



DO WHAT YOU LOVE.

To get clear on what you love, consider the following questions, jotting your ideas down in the space below. Jot down the first thoughts that come to mind, not worrying about writing full sentences.

- What would you spend your days doing if money were no object?
- What parts of your job do you tend to get lost in?
- What do you wish you could do more of?
- What aspects of your work do you look forward to doing the most?
- What hobbies or activities bring you joy?
- When do you feel the happiest at work?
- What are you passionate about learning?

DO WHAT YOU'RE GOOD AT.

To get clear on what you're good at, consider the following questions, jotting your ideas down in the space below. Jot down the first thoughts that come to mind, not worrying about writing full sentences.

- Do people tend to ask you for advice on particular topics?
- Are there subjects or concepts that come easily to you?
- What tasks do you consistently complete before your given deadline?
- When do you receive the most accolades on your work?
- Have you won any awards or received special recognition?
- Are there times that people are impressed by your work despite the fact that you put in relatively little effort?

DO WHAT THE WORLD NEEDS.

Everyone has unique skills that can benefit the world in different ways. How can you want bring value to the people and world around you? Consider the prompts below and jot down the first thoughts that come to mind, not worrying about writing full sentences.

- What do you do to bring happiness to your friends and family?
- How can your work make people's lives easier?
- When do you feel like you're making a difference?
- Why would a company hire you over someone else?
- How can your unique qualities and skills be applied to make yourself and others successful?
- What issues do you see that others tend to overlook?

DO WHAT YOU CAN BE REWARDED FOR.

Compensation can come in many forms, for many things. Consider the prompts below and jot down the first thoughts that come to mind, not worrying about writing full sentences.

- What activities can you be paid for?
- If you weren't paid in money, what form of compensation would you accept?
- Would you prefer consistent income? Are you comfortable with fluctuations in your pay if that means having periods of time where you're making a lot more than you thought possible?
- If you could turn your hobby into a viable business, how would you do it?
- Is there a healthy level of competition for your work?

NEXT... THINK ABOUT YOUR IDEAL DAY

Now that you understand how the four elements of ikigai fit into your life, it's time to give them relevance by thinking about your perfect day. Close your eyes and visualize your perfect day from start to finish. Set a timer for 20 minutes and really allow yourself to fall into the exercise using each of your five senses.

TAKE TIME TO REFLECT

Use the space below to reflect on your visualization, answering each of the following questions.

- What did you do?
- What didn't you do?
- How did you feel?
- Who was there?
- Where there any sights or scents that came to mind?
- How did your day differ from your present life?
- Did your visualization feel realistic and/or attainable?