

Identifying Your Ikigai

Yukari Mitsuhashi describes finding your ikigai as embarking on an unknown adventure that takes us beyond choosing a career and looks at all aspects of our living (Mitsuhashi, 2018).

To identify your ikigai, you must not limit yourself to the present but search your past for clues. It is likely that your ikigai was apparent from your early school years onwards and can be recovered by sifting through your memories.

Reflect on each of the following questions (inspired by the writings of Mitsuhashi) before completing the boxes provided:

Childhood

- What did you enjoy most of all during your childhood?
- What memories are strongest?
- What emotions do they bring to mind?
- How do these memories, thoughts, and emotions affect you today?

Over your lifetime

- What have been the most significant events in your life since your childhood?
- What have been the greatest changes (inside and outside your control)?
- When were your emotions most affected?

Present

- What brings you happiness daily (is it something you do, or something that happens to you)?
- When do you feel *most* happy?
- When do you feel most fulfilled?
- What makes you smile and feel joy when you think of it?

The greatest joy

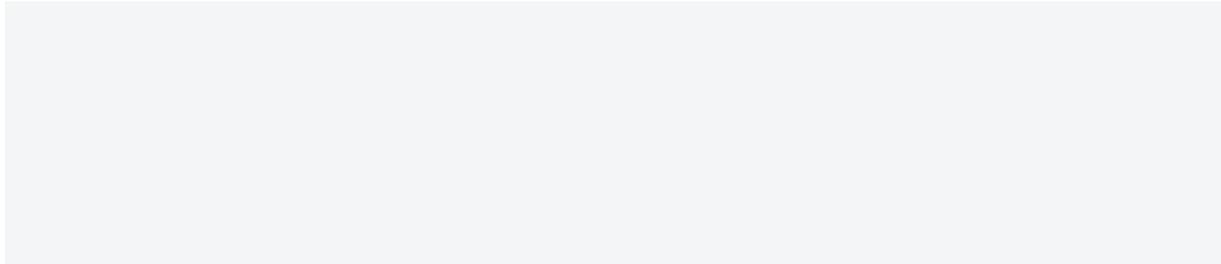
- When do you experience your strongest emotions?
- What and when do you feel most moved?
- When do you experience your greatest curiosity?
- What do you do that never leaves you feeling bored?

Change

- What would you like to change in your life now?
- What changes would you like in the future?
- What can you do about these changes?

Finding your passions

- What is it you do without being asked?
- What would you continue to do, even if the rest of the world failed to understand why?
- What would you do even if you had all the money you needed?
- What do you look forward to in the future?
- What makes you feel most alive and want to stay alive?



Review the answers, and use them to reflect on their meaning regarding your ikigai.

Can you see common themes and pastimes that were important to you?

Are the patterns from your past reflected in your present?

References

- Mitsuhashi, Y. (2018). *Ikigai: Giving every day meaning and joy*. London: Kyle Books.

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