

# Ikigai

# Self-Coaching Guide

## What is Ikigai?

According to the Japanese, we all have an ikigai (pronounced “eye-ka-guy”) – iki means ‘life’ and gai means ‘value’ or ‘worth’. It translates, roughly, ‘that which makes life worth living’ or *raison d’être*. We can interpret ikigai as finding value in one’s life or discovering one’s purpose.

## What should I do with my life?

The ancient concept of ikigai is a lifestyle that strives to balance the spiritual with the practical. This balance is found at the intersection where your passions and talents converge with the things that the world needs and is willing to pay for. The following Venn diagram illustrates this concept perfectly.

Exploring the concept of ikigai and the questions that come with it, can help you find a purposeful and contented life. The whole concept has been boiled down to four questions:

- 1) What do you really love?
- 2) What are you good at?
- 3) What does the world need from you?
- 4) What can you get paid for?

If you’re retired or have a secure income, you may not have to worry about what you can be paid for, so ignore number 4 and focus on the remaining three questions.



Sometimes hobbies or volunteering, due to part-time working, can contribute to achieving the necessary balance.

The idea is not only to find your purpose but the proper balance between all aspects surrounding it, for the current season of your life or for the season of your life you are about to enter.

## Further reading:

*Ikigai: The Japanese secret to a long and happy life* by Hector Garcia & Francesc Miralles (2017).

*“There is no greater gift you can give or receive than to honor your calling.  
It’s why you were born. And how you become most truly alive.”  
Oprah Winfrey*

## More Information

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