

? 1. Find Your Ikigai: Your ‘reason for being’ is found at the intersection of your passion, your ability, and other people’s needs

You can find ikigai or life purpose by asking: 1. What do you love? 2. What can you be great at? and 3. What will the world pay you for? The psychologist Viktor Frankl survived the WW2 Nazi concentration camps, where he learned the critical importance of finding life meaning. Usually we feel connected to something bigger by serving other people through our relationships or professional calling.

? 2. Seek Flow: People are happiest when they’re so engaged in an activity they forget about time

We all have activities that put us into a state of flow, when hours fly by like minutes. These are a strong hint of what our ikigai is. Remember the activity must be challenging enough, have a clear target, and you must have singular focus. It’s better to focus on our processes and keep improving them daily.

? 3. Eat Light: Eating less calories but more nutritious foods (like vegetables) is key to ‘the Okinawa diet’

The island of Okinawa in Japan is one of the ‘blue zones’ where people live much longer than average. The most important dietary factors are probably eating 7+ different vegetables daily and eating less than 1,900 calories per day. Important healthy foods include: sweet potatoes, green tea, tofu and fish.

? 4. Relax With Others: Spending quality time with family and friends is almost universal among those who live longest

Strong social connections provide ikigai, lower stress, and help people live longer and happier lives. In Ogimi, elders meet with friends daily, to chat, laugh, drink tea, or play games. In community groups, they celebrate birthdays, festivals, and religious rituals.

? 5. Move Mindfully: Continuous gentle exercise is part of their daily routine

The longest-living people tend to engage in continuous active movement, but not hard strenuous exercise. It’s part of their daily routine, such as walking to the store or maintaining a garden. Many practice traditions that combine movement with breathing, like tai chi.

? 6. Forget Retirement: Remaining active without an end date is essential to feel engaged with life and others

People in Japan are more likely to keep working part-time even into old age, as a way of giving to society and keeping active, mentally and physically. Contributing utility or beauty to those around us keeps our life feeling meaningful, not endless leisure time.

? 7. Embrace Impermanence: To become resilient, we can enjoy each moment, celebrate our flaws, and prepare for the worst

Some tools for handling life's obstacles... Ichi-go ichi-e teaches us to enjoy each moment because it will only happen once. Wabi-sabi is celebrating the flawed, imperfect, and broken. Negative visualization is a Stoic technique, imagining the worst that could happen.

This is just a sample!

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