

LIVING UP TO YOUR IKIGAI

by:

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Have you ever got to the point of wondering about your own purpose in life? Questions like, “what am I here for”, “what on earth am I staying for”, “what it is that feeds my soul”? Does it ever storm your mind on repeat or aren’t these the questions that landed on you upon waking? In the brink of a modernized world, it is easy to stay and just indulge in conformity. We seldom ponder questions about our purpose anymore- our minds are fixated with what is not here and, our souls look forward to material things. If I ask you when was the last time you feel connected to your being, can you answer me right away? Can you answer with conviction, bliss and certainty? If yes then, my heart is happy for you but if not then it’s not too late.

It will probably take a long time for an individual to bring himself to ask this question, which is just fair since these things will open you to vulnerability and rawness. These emotions are sometimes so threatening, we just lock them out of sight. However, these are also very powerful tool that leads to discovering our truth aligned with purpose. In search for these questions, the Japanese even coined a term for it called “Ikigai”. It is a concept which translate roughly as the “happiness of being always busy” and also leads to the explanation of the extraordinary longevity of Japanese. It stresses the importance of small things in the life of the Japanese people and builds up the entirety of their lives. Being active even at an old age, consciously picking and eating the right amount of food, exercising regularly, and sharing your life with the community are just some of the things that leads to the discovery of an Ikigai or your purpose for living. To the Japanese, it is really essential to move in a way that is aligned with your purpose that it even got to the point of being totally consumed. Some of these are evident through the life of famous

artists such as Haruki Murakami, Hayao Miyazaki, Mieko Kawakami, Hiroki Kawakami and a lot of artisans who are engaged in their own craft almost half of their lives. Certainly, there are a lot of outstanding and superb things that these people can do once they got lost in the art they trying to create. They, who are always aiming to stay firm by doing one's best becomes engage in their flow and never cease to practice getting into it. And overtime they are so into overcoming the obstacles that hinders achieving their perfect state in life and work which is also the reason why the birth rate in their country declines. They've been so immersed at work; family is almost not a choice to be considered. Even some of the Takumis, or commonly known as the artisans who are experts in a particular manual skill doesn't seem to have a new generation who's going to take up their craft. The thing is, the people of Japan have their distinct way for creating and is really a treasure trove of traditional work. It defines their passion and love for their Ikigai, that it clearly through their work and life. Another person who is a great example for the outstanding love of Japanese beliefs and culture is the director of the animated films produced by studio Ghibli- Hayao Miyazaki. In 2013, Miyazaki announce that he was going to retire and it was filmed that until he is feeble, he would still do his own craft and draw. He was even documented drawing at their studio until the day of his retirement. The same thing goes for a lot of musicians, artists and innovators around the world, who are deemed to have clear Ikegais. They do what makes their soul happy until the day of their death. Some examples of these were Albert Einstein, who died writing a formula, Jose Rizal, who died writing as well, and the recluses in the world who protects their space in order to create.

The drive to find one's purpose is so crucial in the life of an individual. Not only does it make the world better but it is also a proof of the improvement we can make for ourselves Although there are a lot of things that can lead you to its discovery and lots of process to go through, it would still be rewarding going through it and largely depends on you if you wanted to be consumed by it. The work that you will put will matter more than you'll ever know. The hardships, evaluation, criticisms and will are also necessary

ingredients towards uncovering the fire in your soul. You have to remember that it can only be done by unwavering perseverance and faith that God is bigger than you and that there are things that are bigger than the corner you choose to reside in. Finding a reason for living will require you to abandon doubt and fear, because these things, if given too much account will only hinder your progress. Remembering to be kind to yourself while in search for it and of course the heart to keep it will fuel you in the long run. It doesn't even matter if you identify yourself as an artist, creator, Takumi or an innovator or any of the names people call themselves, you just have to find the person you want to be and start walking the talk. Surely, in the right time and manner your ikigai will come to you, and you will start to live it far from the person you were before.

References:

depedbataan.com
The Official Website of DepED Division of Bataan