Ikigai is a Japanese word that encapsulates the philosophy of “your reason for living”. It extends further to believing your life is worth living.

No country or language has a monopoly on the term – think French, Raison d’être or Italian, Ragion di essere.

“Ah finally, I get you,” you say. “Sounds a lot more like fun than falling on your sword!”

What the Japanese did do was to study the concept and scientifically measure the impact of having meaning in your life in terms of longevity, happiness and health.

In 1994, Japanese adults between the ages of 40 and 79 were surveyed to see if they have Ikigai in their lives.

This survey, which took place over a period of seven years, showed that those respondents who indicated Ikigai in their lives had lower stress levels and better self-rated health. A lack of Ikigai particularly had an impact on cardio-vascular health (specifically susceptibility for strokes).

“Enough with all the theory – where are you going with this?” you ask.

The significance of discovering your Ikigai – reason to wake up – is that in addition to living a life with purpose, you can also plan to follow more than one Ikigai. There is no limit to the number of reasons for living or the size or time-period of your purpose. You can devote your life to realising a single Ikigai or have more than one Ikigai at the same time.
“How do I find my Ikigai? Is it difficult and expensive? Will it take a lot of time?”

No. You just need to find some quiet time.

It will be the first thing that jumps into your mind, the things that you would love to do when you have more time and money.

Think about what fascinates you. Can you submerge yourself entirely in this passion?

It can be so strong that you are already living or breathing it.

It may ask you to pursue it with warrior-like alliance that sets it apart from other hobbies or pursuits.

Ikigai has also been described as a healthy passion that makes you feel as though life is worth living.

It allows you the freedom to decide how much you want to freely give to it. It may or may not be linked to an economic status or a daily state of things.

**IKIGAI MAKES YOU FEEL A PART OF SOMETHING SPECIAL AND IS AN INHERENT ASPECT OF WHO YOU ARE.**
It can be something as simple as caring for others. Some people find it in opening their mind to new possibilities. This could entice you into a limitless amount of spontaneous and life-changing opportunities.

The basis of Ikigai is not to only enrich your own life, but also to enhance the lives of others.

You can have as many Ikigais as you like, throughout your life. There is no reason that you can’t have more than one Ikigai at any particular period in your life.

Defining your Ikigai is a very personal and private journey. Combining it with some proactive financial planning can result in achieving what you dream and maybe much, much more!

“I knew it!” you triumphantly explode. “There has to be a catch.”

Not at all. Proper goal-setting and planning are all you need to turn your dreams into reality.

Let’s use Private Wealth Management’s Lifestyle Financial Planning Circle to find your Ikigai:

1. Substitute Lifestyle with Ikigai. This is your goal, dream or passion.
2. Return. This is the first part of the how. You now get physical and take a warrior-like action by calculating how much growth will be enough to realise your Ikigai.
3. & 4. These are the next parts of the how – how and where you will invest and how much risk you need to take to find your Ikigai.

“The master in the art of living makes little distinction between his work and play, his labour and his pleasure, his mind and his body, his education and his recreation, his love and his religion. He hardly knows which is which. He simply pursues his visions of excellence at whatever he does, leaving others to decide whether he is working or playing. To him, he is always doing both.”

James A. Michener