

# Ikigai Summary

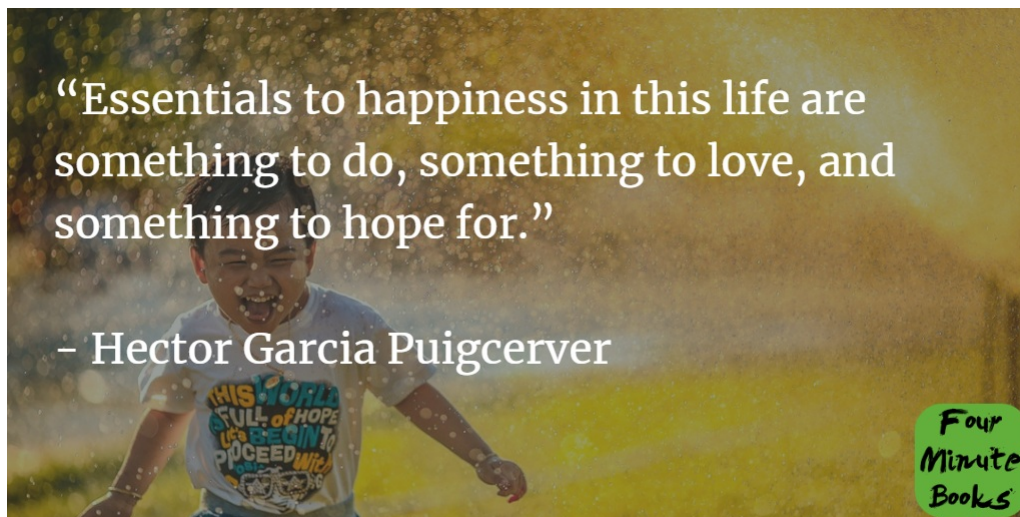
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**1-Sentence-Summary:** *Ikigai* explains how you can live a longer and happier life by having a purpose, eating healthy, and not retiring.

**Read in:** 4 minutes

**Favorite quote from the author:**



Do you want to live a long life? How about a happy one? What if you could have both? The secret to a long life actually comes from finding joy and purpose every day. Most of us think of these ideals as mere dreams that only few achieve. However, the people of Japan have practiced ikigai, or their “reason to live,” which has helped them live longer, more joyful lives. The practice of ikigai is what makes some areas of Japan part of the 5 Blue Zones of the world where people live the longest.

Many people find themselves trapped in the never-ending need to do everything faster, better, and harder. In contrast, discovering your ikigai will help you slow down and enjoy life more. Identifying your life’s purpose will also help you live longer as well.

Hector Puigcerver, author of *Ikigai: The Japanese Secret to a Long and Happy Life*, is a native European who moved to Japan in 2004 and became enamored with Japanese culture. Puigcerver also wrote the book *A Geek in Japan* and writes a blog of the same name.

These are my 3 favorite lessons from Ikigai:

1. Having a purpose is a vital component of longevity and happiness.
2. Follow the advice of some of the oldest people in the world if you want to live a long life.

3. To stay healthiest throughout your life, make sure that you are moving enough, even if in small amounts throughout the day.

Ready to learn how to live longer, healthier, and happier? Let's go!

## Lesson 1: If you want to be happy and live longer, discover your ikigai, or reason to wake up in the morning.

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Okinawa, Japan is home to some of the longest-living people in the world. Their secret is ikigai, or two Japanese characters: 'iki' which means life, and 'gai,' or value. Finding your own ikigai can be as simple as asking four basic questions:

- What are your strengths?
- What does the world need?
- What are your passions?
- What can you earn a living doing?

Your ikigai might take you a short time to discover, or it could take much longer. If you find it, however, you may realize that you never want or need to retire, which would give you plenty of time to identify your reason to live. Aside from being made up by the Germans, retirement is associated with an increased risk for many health problems. Searching out your ikigai is the perfect way to never retire and thus avoid deteriorating faster in your old age.

But your ikigai doesn't have to be connected to your job. Your purpose may come from a hobby or your family relationships. **Do whatever you find gets you up in the morning, just make sure that you never give it up.** Okinawans forced into retirement continue to stay active with their hobbies and in their community, which helps them live longer. Research has shown that the elderly people of Okinawa have remarkably lower rates of dementia and heart disease as a result of their purpose and activity level.

## Lesson 2: Okinawan elders know a thing or two about well-being, and we should follow their advice if we want to live as long as they do.

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Seniors have so much wisdom to share with the world from their years of experience. Those of us that are young might sometimes pretend like we know everything, but we should learn a thing or two about life from the generations before us.

One tip from Okinawan centenarians is to worry as little as possible. It helps to slow down, take your time, and realize that you don't have to have it all figured out right away. Anxiety has a myriad of negative health effects. **Focus on enjoying life for what you have,**

**instead of being afraid of what might go wrong.** A great way to do this is to connect with everyone around you, even strangers.

Okinawan old-timers suggest smiling and having an open-heart towards everybody you meet. Your friendliness will help you develop many friendships throughout life. Okinawan elders recommend maintaining those relationships as well. When you become a grandparent your replacement of worry with friends may also help your grandchildren visit more often. Japanese centenarians also endorse eating healthy, waking up early, and making sure you have enough movement throughout your day.

## Lesson 3: A key component of staying healthy is to keep moving throughout the day, no matter how little.

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Residents of Okinawa suggest that you don't always need to play a sport or go running to be healthy. **Longevity and health are more about finding simple, consistent ways to move more through the day.** Intensity may deter consistency, so Okinawans strive for simplicity in their forms of exercise. A walk around the neighborhood, day in the garden, or singing karaoke are just a few simple ways they maintain movement frequently.

Radio Taiso, which was once broadcast on the radio, is a common Japanese exercise habit that has been around for years. Large groups of Japanese would tune into the radio station and listen to directions for how to exercise. In the present day, most watch online or on the television, but the practice still continues throughout the day in Japan. With simple exercises, like lifting your arms above your head and bringing them down again, Radio Taiso is an easy to repeat form of exercise for the Japanese.

Even without Radio Taiso, you can find ways to add small, consistent amounts of movement in your day.

## Ikigai Review

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Ikigai is an incredible concept that can benefit many people. Whether you feel stuck in your job, want to live longer, or just desire a deeper level of happiness and meaning, finding your reason to live will help you. The ikigai summary on Blinkist seems to focus more on how to live a long life than on ikigai itself, but some research on the topic reveals there are multiple books on the subject to explore further. I'm excited to dive in and figure out how not to retire and live happier and healthier!

[Read full summary on Blinkist >>](#)

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## Who would I recommend the Ikigai summary to?

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The 35-year-old father of two who is uncertain if he wants to spend 30 more years in a career he doesn't love, a 21-year-old college graduate who is planning for retirement, and everyone who wants to be fit and have joy throughout their life.