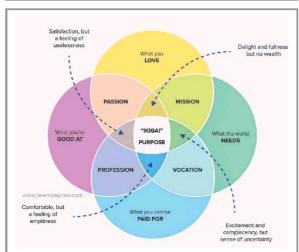
THEMORNINGBULLETIN.COM.AU TUESDAY SEPTEMBER 24 2019

NEWS 21



SENSE OF PURPOSE: The Japanese concept of ikigai

The artistry of Ikigai: getting paid for what you're good at

DAVID FRENCH, INVESTMENT COLLECTIVE

ONE of the exciting things about working in financial services is the sense of syn-chronicity between what we learn in theory and how we

Rarely a day goes by when I'm not reminded how meaningful our work is, in breaking down the complex-ities of the financial world, so our clients can move to ward achieving their goals in

ward achieving their goals in a way which seems simple. Helping my clients pro-vide for their future, for their families' future, is how I make a living and in turn provide for my family... could there be any better

could there be any better motivation for getting out of bed each day? I saw this concept of mo-tivation and purpose beauti-fully illustrated when I attended a symposium for health professionals, as part of my work for an organisof my work for an organis-ation that is involved in

ation that is involved in helping doctors manage their own health. Like other great graphic organisers, this one looks impressive in and of itself. The overlapping outer cir-cles look petals of an iconic Asian flower such as the chrysanthemum, which fea-tures prominently in Chi-nese artwork as a symbol of survival.

In the "inner petals", one can make out a face or a star or a mask. And all of those layers meet in the middle, in

its heart - as all good treasures do – at the point de-scribed as ikigai, which loosely translates to your

reason for being.

The Japanese island of Okinawa, where ikigai has its origins, is said to be home to the largest number of cento the largest number of cen-tenarians in the world. Re-searchers who try to understand their vitality have arrived at varying con-clusions – about their diet and exercise, the quality of their air – but they also keep coming back to the concept

coming back to the concept of a meaningful life directly contributing to a longer life. To put it another way, a meaningless life – a sense of emptiness, uncertainty or uselessness about how you spend your days - could well shorten your lifespan. Just days after I saw this

Just days after I saw this concept of ikigai illustrated for the first time, I read in the paper about a local sculptor who is using her previous experience in retail to develop her artistic products and processing the same products and processing the same process. ucts and proce

ucts and processes.
""If you go into making art with the mentality you won't make money then you won't," she said.
Now I think that's a very

clever and very pertinent ob servation

servation.

I hear all the time about other artists – photographers, designers, website developers and musicians – who are invited to donate their trade to the property of the control of their work or time in ex-

change for "exposure". About these so-called "influencers" who make dethey donate their goods or services in exchange for a shout out on their Instagram

page.
It's all good and well to be good at art, to love making art, and to justify its importance in contributing given region's cultural offer-

But, if you don't plan to at least recoup your costs – in terms of materials, packing, postage, transport and so on postage, transport and so on let alone pay yourself a wage for the hours you put into each piece, then it seems unlikely your art is going to bring you much peace of mind. Worse, pouring all that money into something you (lot) tet naif for is mobably

don't get paid for is probably don't get paid for is probably going to cause you some de-gree of uncertainty – about how to pay the bills, for ex-ample – and leave your pockets empty. How about you ... how's your ikigai?

your ikigai?

Are you slogging away at a job which bores you because it pays the bills?

Are you barely paying the bills in a job which you nevertheless love because you're helping people?

Are you getting paid

Are you getting paid heaps to do a job which you're not even sure you're very good at?

Making an appointment with a trusted financial planner is the first step to balancing out what you love and

ing out what you love and are good at with how society es your work and what you get paid for it.



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