



Ikigai and positive psychology are two complementary approaches aimed at fostering individual fulfillment and well-being. Positive psychology, founded by Martin Seligman and Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi, is a branch of psychology that focuses on the positive aspects of human life, such as happiness, resilience, optimism, and the meaning of life. It seeks to understand and cultivate the conditions that allow individuals and communities to flourish and lead a satisfying life.

Ikigai, as a Japanese concept meaning "reason for being," finds particular resonance in the principles of positive psychology. Indeed, the discovery and pursuit of one's Ikigai are closely linked to several key concepts of this approach, such as well-being, engagement, positive emotions, and the meaning of life.

According to Seligman's well-being theory, happiness and fulfillment rely on five pillars: positive emotions, engagement, positive relationships, meaning, and achievement (PERMA model). The pursuit of Ikigai fits perfectly into this perspective, by encouraging the individual to cultivate these different dimensions in his or her life.

Take the example of Sophie, a teacher passionate about transmitting knowledge and accompanying students. By practicing her profession with commitment and deep meaning, she regularly experiences positive emotions, such as joy, pride, and gratitude. She also nurtures positive relationships with her colleagues and students, creating an environment of kindness and mutual support. Finally, by watching her students progress and flourish, she feels a sense of achievement and meaningful contribution. Teaching has become Sophie's Ikigai, allowing her to live in harmony with her values and fully flourish.

Another central concept of positive psychology is that of "flow", theorized by Mihaly

Csikszentmihalyi. Flow refers to a state of total concentration and absorption in an activity, where the individual is fully engaged and experiences great intrinsic satisfaction. This state is often associated with the performance of activities related to one's talents, passions, and values, which are key elements of Ikigai.

Imagine the journey of Jean, a music enthusiast who made his passion his livelihood by becoming a composer. When he creates a new melody, he enters a state of flow, forgetting the passing time and external concerns. He is completely absorbed by his activity, mobilizing his skills and creativity to bring his inspirations to life. This experience of flow, regularly lived in the exercise of his Ikigai, greatly contributes to his well-being and personal development.

Positive psychology also emphasizes the development of character strengths and virtues, seen as essential resources for leading a fulfilling life. Among these strengths, we find creativity, curiosity, love of learning, perseverance, authenticity, and gratitude. The discovery and pursuit of one's Ikigai promote the deployment of these strengths, by encouraging the individual to cultivate his/her talents, explore new horizons, and persevere in the face of challenges.

Take the example of Anna, a marine biology researcher who found her Ikigai in studying and preserving marine ecosystems. Her insatiable curiosity and love of learning push her to constantly deepen her knowledge and explore new research paths. Faced with environmental challenges, she demonstrates perseverance and determination to raise public awareness and promote sustainable solutions. Her authenticity and commitment shine through in each of her actions, inspiring those around her and giving meaning to her work. By living her Ikigai, Anna cultivates and fully expresses her character strengths.

Lastly, positive psychology underscores the importance of giving life meaning by contributing to something larger than oneself and working for the common good. This dimension is at the heart of Ikigai, which invites the individual to find his/her place in the world and contribute to the edifice, by putting his/her talents and passions at the service of others and society.

Imagine the journey of Pierre, a social entrepreneur who created an association aimed at promoting urban agriculture and creating social links in disadvantaged neighborhoods. By cultivating his Ikigai, he found a way to combine his passion for gardening, his project management skills and his desire to have a positive impact on society. Every day, he gets up with the feeling of serving a cause that transcends him and of creating a positive impact in the lives of others. This awareness of working for the common good gives a deep meaning to his existence and nourishes his sense of accomplishment.

In conclusion, Ikigai and positive psychology converge in their desire to promote human fulfillment and cultivate the positive aspects of life. The discovery and pursuit of one's Ikigai

naturally adhere to the principles of positive psychology, promoting well-being, engagement, positive emotions, development of character strengths, and the meaning of life. By integrating these two approaches, the individual has a powerful tool to navigate towards a life filled with meaning, joy and contribution to the world around them.

Key Takeaways:

1. Positive psychology and Ikigai are two complementary approaches that aim to promote individual fulfillment and well-being.
2. Positive psychology focuses on the positive aspects of human life, such as happiness, resilience, optimism, and the meaning of life.
3. Ikigai, a Japanese concept meaning "reason for being," finds particular resonance in the principles of positive psychology.
4. According to Seligman's well-being theory (PERMA model), happiness and fulfillment are based on five pillars: positive emotions, engagement, positive relationships, meaning, and accomplishment.
5. The concept of "flow," theorized by Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi, refers to a state of total concentration and absorption in an activity, often associated with performing activities linked to one's talents, passions, and values.
6. Positive psychology emphasizes the development of character strengths and virtues, viewed as essential resources for leading a fulfilling life.
7. The discovery and pursuit of one's Ikigai promote the deployment of these character strengths, encouraging the individual to cultivate his/her talents, explore new horizons, and persevere amidst challenges.
8. Positive psychology underlines the importance of giving life meaning by contributing to something larger than oneself and working for the common good, a dimension central to Ikigai.
9. Ikigai and positive psychology align in their aim to promote human fulfillment and cultivate positive life aspects by fostering well-being, engagement, positive emotions, the development of character strengths, and the meaning of life.