



Maro Up!

The Secret to Success Begins with Arigato:

Wisdom from the “Warren Buffet of Japan”

By Janet Bray Attwood and Ken Honda

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Introduction

By Janet Bray Attwood

This is the story of Japan's largest private investor, Wahei Takeda: how he made his fortune and how he thinks about money—making it, investing it and using it for good in the world—based on his profound teaching of *maro*, the core principle of his way of life and the foundation of his success. By learning about *maro* through the example of Wahei's life, you can also become financially successful—and profoundly happy to boot.

The person that I have to thank most for making this entire story possible appeared to me in the form of a quiet, unassuming guy named Toyokazu Tsuruta.

At first glance, he was totally typical of most Japanese men that I had met. White starched button down shirt, navy blue suit, red tie, soft-spoken, impeccable manners, everything perfectly put together. Yawn...

But then, when he spoke, this small, mild mannered Japanese man became magical.

Toyo, as he asked to be called, had flown in from Tokyo the night before to take my four-day Passion Test Certification Program in Vancouver, Canada. Being a great student of people, I feel I am a pretty good judge of others, but Toyo surprised me.

From the moment we started asking for volunteers to stand up in front of the other 50 students and share what they had just learned, Toyo was the first on his feet, sharing with the wit and power of a seasoned transformational leader.

On the third day of our course, Toyo approached me during a break and asked, "Janetsan – may I talk with you?" respectfully bowing his head as he spoke.

"Sure Toyo, what's up" I said, totally in love with his sweet, kind nature.

"Janetsan, I think your Passion Test would be very well received by the Japanese."

"Cool" I said, once again surveying his choice of attire as I inwardly thought to myself how great it will be when Toyo finally unbuttons that top button and shares one of his favorite jokes.

"Janetsan," Toyo continued, "I'm going to get your book, The Passion Test, translated in Japanese, and then I'm going to bring you to Japan so that all Japanese can learn to be passionate."

"Great!" I told him, as I said under my breath, "We'll see."

I hated my lack of enthusiasm for Toyokazu's vision, but almost every person who has taken my certification program, at one time or another, promises me something extraordinary, and to be honest, few actually ever really deliver.

So, unfortunately, my past experience was coloring the gift that Toyo had just so sincerely laid before me.

Eleven months later on July 7, 2013, The Passion Test book had been published in Japanese and I was delivering my first Japanese program in Tokyo, all thanks to my dear new friend, Toyokazu Tsuruta.

When I arrived at Narita airport, Toyo asked me if I would like to meet his other mentor by the name of Ken Honda. Ken Honda, Toyo explained, has written over 100 books and is the greatest of all transformational leaders in Japan. "Ken even presents on Tony Robbins' stage," Toyo said smiling from ear to ear.

"Wow, I'm honored," I said. "I'd love to meet this guy."

At 6 pm sharp, Ken Honda arrived at my hotel in his big black Mercedes SUV.

"Janet, I'm so happy to meet you," Ken said, as he gave me a big warm hug.

"You're not really from Japan are you?" I said half joking. "I mean, who wears loud Hawaiian shirts and hugs in Japan?" I told him, laughing.

"Only me!" Ken confidently replied.

It took about two seconds for me to fall in love with Ken Honda.

While we were sitting in this very interesting restaurant called "The Ninja," Ken started telling me about his mentor, Wahei Takeda.

"Wahei's the happiest person I know. He's like the Warren Buffett of Japan," Ken explained. "He used to run one of the largest candy companies in the country, and the factory workers listen to children singing 'Arigato' which means 'Thank you' as they are making this very special and very popular candy for babies. Wahei feels that the energy that comes from the children singing while the factory workers are making the candy is why his candy is a best seller."

As the night wore on, I was completely and totally mesmerized by all of Ken's stories about Wahei, and I knew I had to ask Ken if he would introduce me to him.

Afraid that Ken would say no, I gathered myself together and in my most persuasive feminine voice I cooed, "Please Ken...I know I'm supposed to meet Wahei, this is why I've come to Japan, I'm sure of it!!"

“Wahei is very busy and it can take up to two weeks until his schedule opens up to see him,” Ken said matter-of-factly. “Maybe next time,” he continued. “Right now is too soon.” As he gulped down more sushi, I was dismayed, but I couldn’t stop myself from dreaming of meeting Wahei, the great mentor of Toyo’s mentor.

The next morning at 10 a.m. I had a meeting with Forest Publishing who was both my publisher and the ones responsible for putting on my first one day event in Japan. Ken had mentioned at dinner that my publisher happened to also be Wahei’s publisher.

“Tedosan,” I blurted to the founder of Forest Publishing as I walked into his office. His nickname was Ted. “I must meet Wahei!”

“You want to meet Wahei?” Tedosan replied.

“Yes!” I replied. “I must!”

With that, Ted turned and walked back into his office. Five minutes later he returned.

“You want to meet Wahei?” he asked smiling.

“More than anything!” I replied.

“Tomorrow at 1:30,” he told me.

The next morning, I was on a bullet train with Wahei’s Vice President, Koichi. By the time we reached Nagoya I felt as though I was meeting one of the most enlightened men I had ever had the privilege to meet (and if you know my story, I spent several years traveling all over India and Nepal meeting enlightened teachers).

As we drove up to Wahei’s business compound, I couldn’t help but notice that there were no guards, no scary barking guard dogs, and no locked gates. Standing inside of the building, I could see through the glass doors that the great Wahei was there waiting for our arrival. I couldn’t help but wonder as our taxi slowly made its way to the front of the building, what he would think of this middle aged woman, from Hollywood, California no less, who had written a book called *The Passion Test*.

Once inside the glass door and standing in front of Wahei, any concern I may have had about his acceptance of me vanished completely. I could tell by looking into his laughing eyes and by his warm smile that Wahei really did love everyone and that he really was, as Ken had said, “pure love.”

“This is for you from Wahei,” Eri Sanada, Wahei’s personal assistant said to me as Wahei handed me a delicate wooden box.

When I opened the wooden box, I saw a beautiful gold coin, just like the one that Ken Honda had shown me when we were having dinner that Wahei had given to him.

When I looked back up at him, Wahei's bright shining eyes were staring right into mine. Total acceptance and love was all I could feel coming from him to me.

Wahei it turned out, was no different than the greatest masters that I had had the privilege of spending time with in the high mountains of the Himalayas. Around Wahei there was a warmer air and each moment had deep meaning, a great teaching, a purpose. Around Wahei my heart knew no boundaries and I became the best of me just naturally. And such is the experience of everyone who has had the honor of spending time with the great Wahei Takeda.

I went on to enjoy many more visits with Wahei, and with Ken Honda, which is not unlike being with Wahei. Before we dive in, let me tell you a little more about my dear friend, Ken Honda.

Ken has been blessed with success from a young age. He retired in his late twenties after making a fortune as a consultant and investor to focus on raising his young daughter, Hana. It was during this time he wrote a little book called, "Eight Steps to Happiness and Prosperity."

Ken decided to give his book away for free. He originally ordered 100 copies, but by the time they were about to be printed, he already had over 3,000 requests. Ken kept giving his book away and people kept ordering copies.

You see, Ken wasn't giving away an e-book. He gave away physical copies of his book. At one point, it was costing him over \$100,000 a month in printing and shipping fees alone.

Why would he do such a thing? Read this book and you'll begin to understand.

Ken's book eventually reached over a million people and a publishing career was born.

Today, as Toyo said, Ken has written more than 100 books that have reached more than 6 million people. One of every 20 people in Japan (yes, that's right!) read his books, listen to his podcasts, or attend his seminars. Those seminars attract up to 1,000 people and sell out within an hour.

Ken is a devoted student of Wahei Takeda, and a shining example of the power of Wahei's teachings.

Now for the first time in North America, Ken and I share with you many of the wonderful stories and bits of wisdom from Wahei, along with a number of short clips from videos that were shot from the many informal interviews that I've had with Wahei.

May his journey be one that enlightens you to be all that you can be. May his lessons enable you to become the teacher, living the teaching.

All love,
Janet

For Wealth and Happiness, Maro-Up!

by Ken Honda

[all of Wahei's quotes from his book 貯徳体質 unless otherwise stated]

Often called “the Warren Buffet of Japan,” Wahei Takeda is the most successful investor in the country, and no doubt he’s the happiest one, too! My success is a direct result of listening and applying Wahei’s philosophy of “Maro Up!” to my own life and business. I know from personal experience, that if you take what you learn in this ebook and apply it to yourself, you too, will see success blossom in your life.

What is *maro*? The word is short for *magokoro*, which means “true heart,” or “sincere heart,” in Japanese. You could say maro is strong in those who have a pure heart and lead an upright life. Even in Japanese, it’s hard to define maro because it’s a spiritual state, but it could be called a state of selflessness; the opposite of ego. It can be thought of as the deeper end of one’s consciousness, closer to the collective consciousness, the level at which all of humanity and the universe are one. As such, maro is the wellspring of our unconditional love for others, and also for ourselves.

Maro is also the key to success. Wahei says that those who are in touch with maro always create win-win situations for themselves and the people around them. It follows that if you have a pure heart and true sincerity, not only will people treat you better, but you’ll begin to feel the whole universe support you as well.

When your maro increases, Wahei says you “*maro-up*” and invite many miracles in your life. To touch on just a few:

- You become beautiful and attract all good things, because to maro-up you must read, write, think and speak beautiful thoughts. Doing so fills you with loving wisdom that radiates from you, shines through all you do, and attracts all good to you.
- You love your life because to maro-up you must always follow your passion and intuition to take the path that intrigues or excites you, and so your life is always moving in the direction of greater happiness and fulfillment. As Janet says, “What you love and God’s will for you are one and the same.” When you follow your passions and intuition, you’re following the path designed to give you greatest happiness.
- You become grateful because, you must say “Thank you” to everything you encounter, as this is the quickest and easiest route to being in touch with your *maro*. By giving thanks, you are able to appreciate the sheer miracle of simply existing, which allows you to see the miracles that surround you.

Let me tell you the story of how I came to know Wahei and learned how to *maro-up*.

I started a financial consulting business when I was 21 years old. Thanks to my father’s guidance and the teachings of my mentor (who I would later write about in

my first bestseller, *The Millionaire's Philosophy for a Happy Life*), my business was so successful that I was able to retire at the age of 29 when we found out my wife was pregnant.

It turned out to be the perfect decision. I witnessed my daughter's first words (I'm convinced she said "Daddy"!) and her first steps. Being with her was the ultimate satisfaction I could imagine at the time. We seemed to have a perfectly happy life. But one evening as I did some soul searching along the beach, I looked up at the moon and felt that deep down, something was missing.

A few days later, out of nowhere I had a vision of myself as an author, writing books. I had no background in literature or writing at all, but I couldn't get the idea out of my head. After some quick research, it was immediately obvious that I had zero chance of becoming a writer. I had never written anything longer than a high school essay! So I put the dream aside.

But the image just kept coming back. I realized that I wanted to prove something. Many of my friends thought that my business success had been entirely due to my fortunate upbringing, and there was something to that. My father had trained me since childhood to be a business owner, and so of course I could do it.

But that's not the whole story, I thought. I will prove that anything is possible by succeeding at something I've never attempted before!

I wanted to choose the path with the biggest risk, and that seemed to be writing books. My motto in life is: If something scares me, I have to do it!

So I began to write down short stories about my life and how I had come to be financially independent. With encouragement from a friend, I decided I'd send a copy of the essay to whoever wished to read it. Right away the requests started coming in, slowly at first and then more and more.

Before I knew it, I had distributed 100,000 copies for free, and a publisher contacted me with an offer for my next book. The only problem was I had nothing more to write! I told the publisher this, but he insisted that I must have another story to tell. So I went back to work, and as I did, I realized that I *could* write, and I *did* have another book in me. This is how I became a successful, published author in Japan.

But it was the first little booklet that changed my life the most. I had made the rather rash promise to deliver it free of charge anywhere in the world, never imagining that I'd get orders from Africa, Europe, and countries and places I had never even heard of. The cost of printing and mailing was enormous: at one time it was costing me over \$100,000 a month, and that did test my faith. Thankfully, my consulting business managed to pay for everything right when I needed it the most.

So I kept giving out my first booklet for free, and it was this that initially attracted Wahei's attention. He called on the phone one day out of the blue and explained that

he wanted to personally congratulate me for my generosity. Wahei said he loved my story because he felt I was a giving person. After our first conversation, he sent me a gold medallion as a token of his appreciation of my generosity to others. I was deeply moved by this beautiful gift and the sentiments behind it.

The next day Wahei called again and we spoke for about five hours. Wahei was actually doing most of the talking, but I was riveted by every word as he spoke about his life, the ways of the world, the nature of money, and his maro philosophy.

Again, I was very moved by our conversation, and so the next day I sent some flowers to thank him for his time and attention. The following day I received a small package from Wahei containing yet another gold medallion with a thank you note for the flowers.

It was through this simple yet sincere gift exchange that our relationship and the greatest adventure of my life truly began.

“Gratitude moves people” Wahei

One thing people notice right away about Wahei is that he is always smiling. In any photo you see of him, you’ll notice that he has a big smile on his face and an absolutely happy demeanor. Believe me, this isn’t just for the camera. It’s been 14 years since I met Wahei and he became my mentor, so I know him very well and can say that he is always like this in person, too. Without fail, he works to *maro-up*, in part by applying his attitude of gratitude and his habit of saying “Thank you” every day of his life, and this has brought him to a place of great wisdom—and enormous success.

Who is this magical man, and how did he come to be this way? Let me tell you more about him and his teachings, so you can enjoy the same blessings and benefits.

Wahei’s background

Wahei Takeda was born in 1932 in the port city of Nagoya, Japan, the son of a Japanese confectionery maker, and the first of four children in his family. He grew up learning the secrets of making sweets and managing the family business. As a young boy, Wahei witnessed how the townsfolk of his grandmother’s village lived without depending on money, as people got what they needed through bartering during WWII. There he learned that the roots of happiness lie not in money, but in serving other people’s needs.

At the age of 23, Wahei moved to Hokkaido and started a confectionery factory, hoping to make his own fortune. However, the business didn’t flourish as well as he had hoped; in fact, it almost went bankrupt. Wahei’s sweets and cookies were delicious by the standards of Nagoya, but perhaps too simple for the Hokkaido

palate. In an attempt to save his factory, Wahei created one of the first cream-filled sandwich-wafer cookies in Japan. It was an immediate hit and his business quickly expanded.

When Japan went through a bowling craze in the 70's, Wahei jumped in and opened his own bowling alley called "Waku Waku Ball." But the boom ended as fast as it had started, and his sales figures quickly plummeted, leaving him facing yet another threat of bankruptcy. Fortunately, his confectionery business was still strong, so by moving the bowling alley to the second floor of the building and renting out the first floor to shops and restaurants, he was able to make additional income through rent.

But Wahei's friends in the bowling industry weren't as lucky as he was, and they soon turned to him for help. Wahei has always believed that "trouble opens doors to fortune," so instead of turning his friends away, he borrowed money from banks in order to buy their bowling alleys. This kindness was repaid years later when the land the bowling alleys sat on grew in value, further increasing his fortune.

Throughout these business endeavors, Wahei learned to invest in stocks of small and middle-sized companies as a private investor. As his success grew, he became what he calls a "community philanthropist," devoting much time and energy to furthering the growth of small businesses in his community and eventually in a wider area. All throughout his phenomenally successful career, his outlook and philosophy of *maro* were nurtured and led to many more acts of philanthropy.

Years ago, Wahei founded a school for managers to teach them the practice of *marowa* management, which fosters success through growth of *maro*, instead of growth of the ego. He wanted future generations to be able to choose an ego-free path of coexistence and also flourish in their businesses. Wahei was a great example of this: by the time he had reached his 40's, he was fully financially independent and the happy man is he today..

Wahei believes that kindness, generosity, and appreciation of what he has are the keys to how he has been able to maintain and grow his wealth throughout his life. Drawing on the wisdom of the Shinto religion, he has closely examined how people can invite good fortune into their lives. As he thought about the differences between lucky and unlucky people, he realized that one of the main differences between many other wealthy people and himself was that he was satisfied and content with what he had; he wasn't greedy for more. Having been able to *maro-up*, he was already full to over-flowing.

Now 83, Wahei often tells me, "I have all the money I'll need for the rest of my life, which is not long." And so he lives every day as if it were his last. But this doesn't mean he smokes Cuban cigars or indulges himself in luxurious pastimes. Not at all. All he wants to do is to give.

Ken's first meeting with Wahei

I first met Wahei in person in 2008. I get nervous whenever I meet a VIP, so the upcoming meeting with Wahei, the biggest VIP in Japan, got me a little worked up.

I wasn't sure how to present myself, so I asked Koichi, Wahei's Vice President, if I should wear a suit and tie or something more casual. He said I should wear whatever I wanted. I was also concerned about what topics to discuss with Wahei. He gave me the same answer: I should talk about whatever I felt like. I told him that I wanted to make a great impression on this important man because I had the feeling that he might change my life. Koichi replied: "Just be yourself. Wahei doesn't care what you wear, what you say, or how you speak."

When the day finally came, I was very excited, and very glad that Koichi was going with me. We were meeting at the famous Gold Museum Wahei had built to honor gold, which he feels has great spiritual value. The first thing I saw when we arrived was a wall of bamboo shoots around the perimeter of the property. The fence was surprisingly low though: I had been expecting a tall security fence. The gate was also wide open and there were no security guards in sight, which was most unusual for a grand building in Japan.

We passed through the gate, and as we approached the Museum a kindly looking man with white hair and sparkling eyes came out to meet us. This was Wahei. He looked younger than I expected, with a youthful spring in his step, perhaps in part due to the Nike sneakers under his otherwise traditional Japanese clothes. He approached me with the most beautiful and gentle smile I had ever seen, and took both my hands in his. I felt entirely welcome and at home in that moment, and all the many questions I had been preparing to ask faded away in an instant. I suddenly felt that everything would be all right, and I could see a bright future stretching out ahead of me.

Wahei gave us a tour of the Gold Museum, which was as beautiful and impressive as you would imagine a museum of gold to be, and then we entered his private quarters, where snacks and drinks awaited us. We sat and chatted and I felt completely happy and relaxed to be in this man's loving presence. All the questions I had prepared seemed trivial in light of the fulfillment growing in my heart.

I did have one question though: why didn't Wahei put up a proper fence or have any security guards? His humble answer was that he wouldn't want to intimidate his neighbors, and besides, he didn't really need security guards because he had "built-in trust," as he put it. And on the practical side, he said he wouldn't want someone sitting there all day long, doing nothing.

Now I go to visit Wahei every once in awhile, and every time I see him, I feel the narrow boundaries of my consciousness get smashed to pieces. With his gentle comments and little stories, Wahei always seems to be cracking my head open to

release the negative thoughts and habits in there. On my way back to Tokyo, I always feel a new me has been born: more giving, open and trusting. In a word, I have maro'd-up!

Getting to know Wahei: a few anecdotes

The best way to really introduce Wahei is to recount some of my personal experiences with him and some of the amusing and inspiring anecdotes that make the man.

It's not only Wahei's words and actions that I want to share, for he, himself, has a certain presence and exudes such kindness and joy. I would say that Wahei is a 'Life-Shifter': he knows how to help people make major changes in their attitudes and then shift their lives.

What happens when we Maro-up?

Wahei's way of life, his outlook, and his teachings of gratitude all serve as an inspiration to those around him to maro-up. When one is around him their maro, or true heart, resurfaces because the ego holds less and less presence within them. The practice of maro-up is the practice of bringing the true self back into the spotlight. It is the process of handing the reigns of control from the ego to the maro.

Wahei's teaching of gratitude is basically to say thank you to everything that one encounters, and that, along with always taking the path that intrigues or excites you, is the quickest and easiest route to becoming in touch with your maro. By saying thank you, you're able to appreciate the sheer miracle of simply existing, which allows you to realize more of the miracles that surround you. The power of gratitude also spreads to those around you. As people feel the power of gratitude from you, they find it pleasant to be around you.

This is one of the reasons why, when people maro-up, their business, their relationships (including partnerships), and many other aspects of their life improve. As Wahei lives his teachings about gratitude, he is indeed his own best example of what people can be and do, through the practice of maro-up.

About Wahei

Wahei's Character

"Nature and beauty dissolve the bloated ego." Wahei (From "What I Want to Say Now" p.82)

When people meet Wahei, they can see him in two different lights simultaneously: from one angle, he is a man who is obsessed with his power and wants to flaunt it; from the other, he is a man who is totally free of the ego humans generally struggle with. But everyone can agree that, bottom line, he is an eccentric who isn't constrained by conventional thoughts, actions or expectations.

The first view was evident when he was hesitant to attend a certain party out of concern that he would disrupt the party and be a nuisance because everyone would ignore the host and pay attention only to him. One might well see an overblown sense of self in this attitude, or at least a lack of humility. But another might feel that his concern was well-founded and he was very gracious and kind to deny himself the pleasure of the party in order not to risk interfering with the host's enjoyment of it.

Most often though, people talk about Wahei with a sense of awe, as being like a favorite, jolly grandfather who has a playful and healthy self-love and a completely tranquil, if not divine, aura. He often says that, to maro-up, everyone should love the people and even the things in their lives more because, if you love something, it will love you. If you love the world, the world will love you. And if you love and respect money, money will love and respect you too

Wahei's happiness comes from his awareness of a deeper and richer level of life, which you experience more and more as you maro-up. His favorite pastime is walking in the park because his perception of nature is so profound. As he walks along the paths, he hears all living things, from trees to birds to squirrels to rocks, telling him they love him, or singing sweet songs to him. He thinks this is only natural, and anyone can have this experience if they cultivate it by loving everything around them.

This belief stems from his Shinto view that all things possess a divine spirit, but it's not just a belief; it's his direct perception. Every person has a unique experience of the world because they see it through the lens of their own opinions and character. A person with a mean-spirited outlook will find a bleak, uncaring world, and a hopeful person will find the best in people and events. I find it so inspiring to be with a person who sees nothing but love around him. When I'm with Wahei I see the truth of the saying, the world is as you are.

Wahei tends to answer questions in a very roundabout manner, his explanations often filled with tangents that only make sense when one looks at the bigger picture.

For instance, one day a man came to Wahei looking for some investment tips. He wanted to know how to choose the best stocks and had very specific expectations about what kind of advice he would receive.

Wahei smiled and told him, "It's simple. Invest in the most virtuous companies."

Undeterred by Wahei's somewhat vague answer, he inquired further, "Okay. How do you know which companies are virtuous?"

Wahei's eyes twinkled when he responded, "Only a virtuous man knows which companies are virtuous."

He was really saying that you should follow your intuition and align your goals with your heart, and not just chase after money. When you think about whether or not you truly support a company's goals and the methods they use to achieve them, you should be able to feel the answer in your heart. It's less about making money and more about spreading love.

Wahei is jolly, humorous, humble, fun to be with, and thoroughly confusing if you don't know where he's coming from.

Despite the grandeur of the buildings he lives in, Wahei lives a simple life. He follows a plain Ayurvedic diet of mainly grains, beans and vegetables, and he only drinks water. Of course, he could afford the finest teas he wanted, but he is happy with water. He doesn't believe in consuming extravagant foods and expensive wines: he believes that people who wine and dine like that during their 50's, die in their 70's.

When the 'King of Investment' lost a fortune and what he learned

One might ask whether this fortunate man has ever had any setbacks in his life. Yes, in his youth, Wahei saw opportunities and possibilities everywhere, and he liked to challenge himself as much as possible. Of course not everything succeeded, as was clear from his two near bankruptcies. But he has always been able to deal with setbacks gracefully enough that they haven't damaged his positive outlook.

In one case, he was so well supported by those around him that he didn't even know he was in trouble. During the time in his 20's when Wahei was managing his confectionery factory in Hokkaido, his products were in high demand but then one day the orders suddenly stopped. To find out why, he paid a visit to one of the buyers' warehouses. He could not believe what he saw there—months of orders of all of his products, still in their boxes, were stacked up in storage. He was very upset and went to the buyers to ask what the problem was. They explained that his products weren't actually selling very well because they weren't suitable for the

market at that time. However, the buyers had continued placing orders with him because they were very fond of him and didn't want his business to fail!

The news of this kindness was even more upsetting for Wahei because he felt responsible for having put his business associates in such a difficult position. To keep similar situations from happening again, he decided to be extra careful when making business decisions because he never wanted the people who worked with him to regret their decision to do business with him.

Wahei does not believe in dishonesty; he says taking short cuts does not make one truly happy. For many years after the war, sweet products were in high demand. Naturally, his products were selling well but ingredients were expensive due to a shortage of availability. To cut down on the cost of ingredients, the accountants of his company asked if it was possible to switch from fertilized eggs to non-fertilized, which were cheaper. Wahei has always used fertilized eggs in his products, believing them to be more nutritious (although science has not yet supported this view) and the change would not have had much effect on the taste of his products. But he wouldn't do it; he insisted on keeping the quality at the highest level even during difficult times because the products were to be eaten by babies.

The accountant tried to persuade him by saying that it would be a change so minor that no one would notice, but Wahei replied, "Well, now you and I and Heaven know about it." The accountant felt so embarrassed that he never asked him to change his ingredients again.

Wahei has been cheated in business from time to time, but he thinks very little about it. On one occasion about ten years ago, he was sold a particularly overpriced piece of land in Nagoya. Several of his friends expressed concern that he paid several times over market value, so Wahei decided to do a little research. He discovered that the man had been in serious debt. Thanks to the income he made from overcharging Wahei, he was able to pay off that debt.

As far as Wahei was concerned, this turn of events created the most happiness for everyone involved: The man who cheated him was happy because he was able to pay off his large debt, and the man who received that payment was happy, too. Rather than feeling upset as the only person inconvenienced in this interaction, Wahei, in his unique way of approaching the situation, was also very happy, and he chose to let the whole thing go.

Wahei on Giving

The Power of “Thank you”

Wahei might be a very wealthy man, but he never forgets the power of the word “Arigato,” meaning “Thank you” in English. He still makes a practice of saying “Thank you,” hundreds and sometimes thousands of times a day and is always alert to share this technique with those in need of it.

He once met a young man who was out of work and feeling lonely and depressed. He had lost all hope in life and didn’t believe anything could go his way anymore. Wahei listened to his discouraged words and decided to take on the challenge of making him believe in the power of “Thank you.” He offered to give the man 1 million yen in exchange for one million “Thank you’s.” The young man would be paid in monthly installments based on how many “Thank you’s” he could say throughout the month.

The young man thought about it and, even though he felt hopeless about that too, he agreed to give it a try. Each month he was paid one yen for every thank you he had said. After one month, he found a job he liked. A while later, he even found the girl of his dreams. And so it went. Now he is on his feet again and well on his way to a happier life. He told Wahei he realized the power that this word “Arigato” has to effect change in your life, your attitude, your ability to attract positive opportunities in your life, and your future.

To many people Wahei seems to be either a genius or a fool because he sees a much bigger picture that’s beyond most people’s frame of reference. He doesn’t have the normal attitude toward gain and loss, since investing – or giving away – his gold coins doesn’t make any appreciable difference to his riches. Freed from those concerns, he’s always looking to the future and how it can be improved instead of focusing on what he can gain for himself.

“Arigato” and Sweet Thank You’s

I have learned many things from observing Wahei's lifestyle, but what might have surprised me the most about him is his incredible ability to appreciate everything. Wahei believes that gratitude is most important, and that one should appreciate every little thing, even if it seems insignificant. So whenever an unpleasant incident happens, Wahei still looks on the positive side. Rather than sulking or complaining about unfairness or unkind actions, he surprises people by saying “Thank you.”

Wahei believes so strongly in the power of “Thank you” that he created a product that would give it to those at the very beginning of life: the now-famous Arigato (Thank You) Baby Candy. He had the idea to record little children singing “Arigato” over and over in a pretty song, which he played over the speakers at the factory. It was a charming song that made the factory workers happy and imbued the product

with the power of “Thank you.” It also attracted publicity that boosted sales. And, new parents need not worry! The candy is a healthy, potato-based soft biscuit, so it won’t harm the babies’ incoming teeth!

Arigato Baby Candy was a great success, and soon one of his competitors started selling a product that was clearly an imitation of it. Instead of suing the competitor, Wahei decided to turn a blind eye and let them continue. When asked why he didn’t take legal action, Wahei explained that his competitors must have been in a difficult situation and had to take desperate measures, so he did not want to rob them of their livelihood. Interestingly, he was flattered that his competitors decided to imitate his product and not other people’s! His mild temperament and refusal to fight won him the respect of everyone involved. After a while, Wahei decided to visit his competitors and speak to them in person about the situation. He eventually asked them to withdraw their product, and they did a short while after, without the need for complicated legal wrangling.

*“Products born of anger do not sell, and furthermore, people cannot relate to them.”
Wahei (p.29)*

Be thankful in your life

Wahei says it’s important to always be in the process of saying “ Thank you,” whether you are saying it to someone else or just yourself or God. And it’s not necessary to mean it each time you say it. It will gain meaning as you continue to say it, and you will foster goodwill around you as the ripples of your thank you’s bring happiness and good fortune to you and all you meet. The positive environment you create will open doors and lead you to exciting places.

According to Wahei, repeatedly saying “Thank you” will do even more for you. He says it will slowly change the way you view things and help you appreciate whatever comes your way, learn from your mistakes, and build character. Even in a difficult situation, such as having a broken arm, there are two ways to look at the situation. One is to treat it as a terrible outcome and expect everything to go downhill from there, and the other is to be thankful that it wasn’t your neck, and there’s still so much you’re able to do. This positive, resilient attitude to situations that cannot be immediately resolved will help you make the best of every situation that comes your way.

Wahei on Life Work

The right path in life

Those who love what they do are the ones who are successful. If people attempt to become successful through something that they do not love, even if success seems probable for a short while, failure will surely follow. So when I come across someone who is starting something new, I inquire, 'Does that truly excite you?'' (p.12)

Wahei believes that everyone has a “channel to the universe” which one might also describe as a sense of intuition, through which we are all receiving signals regarding the paths we should take in life. These signals manifest themselves through the sense of excitement one feels when participating in an activity or when considering a certain direction in life. It is important to always be receiving, considering and acting on these signals. Having a sense of excitement in your life is a good indication that you are following these signals and are in tune with the universe and the path that will bring you the most happiness. The often overused phrase “follow your heart” is a good means of navigating your life.

If you find yourself at some point in your life not looking forward to anything in particular but just trudging along and lacking any sense of excitement, it's a sign that the road you are travelling on is coming to an end. It's time to look for a new direction or path that you want to take and to do this before problems begin to arise from your present lack of enthusiasm. It's important to change your life because you know it's time to change, not because circumstances are forcing you to change.

The navigation system of the heart

There is a place prepared for you in this world. Wahei says that the purpose of life is to find that place. But sometimes it is hard to find it, so people feel lost. In order to discover that place, you need a good sense of direction; you have to follow the navigation system of your heart.

If you listen to your heart and you learn to follow it, you will never get lost. Listening to your head, on the other hand, is like taking a shortcut that often takes you the wrong way and then gets you lost. Your head might say things like “...you'll make more money this way...” and so you are fooled into going in the wrong direction.

Your navigation system comes pre-installed in your heart, but many people don't use it because they have come to rely on their head too much and they have forgotten how to listen to the heart. They are so busy thinking “What is the right market?” and “What is more profitable?” that they are not sensing what their heart is telling them. What is important is what feels right, and the heart knows best.

To listen to your heart, you need to recognize how you feel, and this is the indicator: When you're having fun, your heart vibrates with joy and happiness and you feel

great about yourself and everything around you. If you are doing something that excites you, you will know you're on the right track because you'll feel it.

On the other hand, when you feel bad, you struggle to feel excitement and can't understand why. This just means this work is not for you. Your heart inherently knows that this is not your path, your place. If you continue along that path, you will start to suffer, and you may get sick, mentally or physically. You will feel tired, lethargic and uninspired. This is your body's way of saying "I don't want to do this anymore."

Then your mind will shift to negativity. When your heart is not satisfied, your head keeps searching for problems. And when you're looking for bad things, you will find them everywhere, and you will use them to perpetuate this negative and destructive cycle.

Wahei on Dealing with Fear and Anxiety

The Power of Appreciation

"If there is anything you should be afraid of, then that is fear itself."

Wahei sees the best in humankind. He treats people the way he wants to be treated—with trust, appreciation, and respect. Therefore, despite being successful and wealthy, he does not hire security to guard his residence.

He had the same attitude in his Gold Museum, where there were no proper burglar alarm systems to protect the exhibits. After the tragic events of 9/11, however, fear suddenly crept upon Wahei. For the first time in his life, Wahei felt afraid. He became concerned that the museum exhibits might attract dishonest people's interest, which in turn could put his staff members in danger. He decided to move all the exhibits of his golden coins and statues into a safe in his own residence.

Ironically, a burglar intruded into his residence the day after he had moved the gold exhibits into the safe. The burglar ran off what he assumed to be \$5,000 worth of gold coins – a rare and exclusive set carved with the faces of historically influential Japanese figures. As luck would have it, he unwittingly stole replica coins by mistake.

The next morning, police came to inquire about the burglary, and after Wahei described the incident, the police promised to catch the intruder. But, to everyone's surprise, Wahei told the police *not* to pursue the culprit, as he had not lost anything. He then added that the burglar had come because of Wahei's fear. Had he not been afraid and moved the gold exhibits, he would not have opened up an opportunity for the stranger to attempt to steal them. Wahei therefore felt apologetic and responsible for leading the person into making a bad decision.

Through this experience, Wahei was finally able to understand fear. He understands the nature of fear to be as follows:

Fear is like a flu virus. It is everywhere and is always seeking opportunities to invade us. When one is vulnerable, fear enters and plants itself deeply into our hearts. It feeds on other emotions, such as loneliness and neediness, and multiplies at a fast pace. Unless the flu gets treated properly, the person acts as a carrier of the virus and spreads it to others.

Unlike a flu virus, however, there is a formula to treat fear: the words "Thank you." Fear, anxiety, and appreciation cannot coexist at the same time, so if one is always content with life and well connected emotionally with others, then he or she will never be invaded by fear. If one is satisfied and thankful for whatever his or her financial situation and lot in life is, even if it is not so glamorous or worthy to show others, he or she will not feel fearful or anxious. It may seem as if we have come full

circle, but this simply shows the power of “Thank you,” and why Wahei is advocating that people constantly repeat “Thank you.”

Wahei believes that one has to be aware of all the words one uses because words have the power to attract things, whether positive or negative. For example, if one tends to have negative thoughts, they will attract misfortune, and if one often utters fear-related words, fear will grow from them.

Having a strong bond with others is also key to diminishing fear and anxiety. To have a happy family, each family member should appreciate each other's role and responsibilities and treat one another with respect. Similarly, if people behave respectfully to their colleagues, there will be no hostility or anxiety in the work environment. Wahei believes that if everyone in a single country could appreciate each other, the same could happen amongst different countries, and world peace would soon become a tangible reality.

Wahei has a set of methods to deal with the negativity of fear and anxiety. He approaches these emotions by proposing an appreciation of ‘negative situations’ in your life: this means turning them around so that you can see them from a new perspective and turn the bad into good.

Appreciation is finding the great side of a situation and by doing this, you become grateful. When there are many great things in your life, you develop gratitude. I smile when I write these words because, when I was learning English as a student, I was very impressed with the fact that the English language had such a fantastic word as “greatful,” which I took to mean being full of what is great. So, in my enthusiasm, I made a spelling mistake! But the meaning of gratefulness as “full of great things” was forever impressed on my mind.

Fear is another hurdle that prevents us from doing what makes us happy. It also makes us cling to things because financial anxiety or being too scared to see what else we are capable of. We might stay in the wrong job with the wrong partner, for all the wrong reasons.

The heart as a navigation system will indicate whether or not you are going in the right direction. When you feel fear and anxiety, it is a swift indication that you are headed in the wrong direction because these emotions will surface when your mind is focused on negative thoughts and gloomy expectations. For example, if you're worried about money, in your mind you will already see yourself without money in the future and this will make you even more fearful.

But this way of thinking is comparable to paying interest on a debt you never borrowed! A future without money is not yet in existence: it may or may not happen. But thinking about it as a given makes you suffer for it prematurely, when there is no assurance that it will happen. Worrying about something that has not and may never happen is a waste of energy. But we are all guilty of filling our minds with worry.

The way to get out of this negative thinking is to focus on what you have here and now. Thank your present situation, focus on appreciating what you have, count all the good things that you have in your life right now, and this will reduce the mental time you have for worrying. In this way, your focus will shift towards appreciation.

Focusing on what you have right now in your life – in the present moment – is essential. Another way to keep a cycle of happiness and good things in your life is to give thanks in advance. For example, if you say, “Thank you for giving me so much money,” the universe receives a reminder to move wealth towards you to make these things manifest.

Sometimes the CEOs of the companies Wahei invests in ask if they can pay him a personal courtesy visit. Because he is a heavyweight shareholder, normally they expect him to request a dividend or question the company’s performance. But Wahei, as is his way, congratulates them and gives them one of his gold coins and a framed certificate of gratitude for their hard work and effort. For many, it is the first time they have been thanked in this way, and they are utterly surprised. For Wahei, cheering the CEO’s spirits and saying “Thank you” is a way to show them that their work is appreciated and to encourage them to continue making valuable contributions.

Wahei thinks that appreciation is a multi-purpose tool, like a Swiss Army knife. It is a life-shifter and a destiny-shifter, and you can use it to improve your life and help fulfill your destiny. He believes that if you complain all the time, you shift down, and if you appreciate all the time, you shift up.

Saying “Thank you” and expressing appreciation will shift your life in so many ways: it can turn your bad relationships with your nearest and dearest to loving ones, and with your customers, to friendly and productive ones.

Once affirming and smiling becomes a habit, the world around you miraculously transforms. (p.28)

How to Maro Up!

'Let's maro-up!'

As you know, Wahei often urges us to “maro-up,” a term he coined from the Shinto concept of magokoro, meaning “true heart.” Shintoism is a religion unique to Japan, and it includes Animism, or the belief that everything has a “kami,” or “god,” or “heart” within. Thus, it is said that Shintoists believe there are 800 million gods.

Wahei believes that each little thing you see contains a heart, mind, and feelings. That's why Wahei has his candies “listen” to Thank-you songs while they are being made. He genuinely believes that when the candies find their way into babies' mouths, the vibration of “Thank you” will be transferred from the candies to the little ones who eat them, uplifting them and helping them to “maro-up.”

Wahei believes that if you give thanks and do good things, good things will come back to you. This is similar to the thoughts on “wise selfishness” expressed by the Dalai Lama: *“It is important that, when pursuing our own self-interest, we should be “wise selfish” and not “foolish selfish.” Being foolish selfish means pursuing our own interests in a narrow, shortsighted way. Being wise selfish means taking a broader view and recognizing that our own long-term individual interest lies in the welfare of everyone. Being wise selfish means being compassionate.”*

Some people may not have money or gold coins to give, as Wahei does, but Wahei believes that even if you don't have any money to give, you can still give many other things. For example, you can:

- share your heart through feeling empathy
- share your smile
- look at people with compassion
- speak gently to people
- physically help people
- give up your seat for another person (In Japan, most people use the train, and so to give up your seat for someone who needs it more than you is a form of kindness.)
- let someone stay at your home a night or two

The wise heart is giving, and receives without limit in return.

10 Ways to Maro-up

1. Walk in nature

“The heart is most moved when it is in touch with nature.” (p.21)

When you immerse yourself in the beauty of nature, the dust around your heart is washed away through the great power of nature and the awe that it inspires. Whatever your culture or day-to-day situation, nature can make you feel refreshed and energized.

Wahei likes to take walks, and he especially enjoys waking up at dawn to see the sunrise: "My favorite habit is to watch the sun rise up and continuously give thanks as it ascends." Through this practice he receives a great deal of energy. Wahei believes in spirit, and he feels that in nature there is a great spirit that you can feel but not see. That spirit heals you. This comes from the Shinto belief in "kami," that each object has its own spirit. In Japanese culture there is a great respect for all things, even the man-made ones. Because of this respect, Japanese people easily feel humbled by the beauty of the natural world.

2. Acquaint yourself with art

We feel moved when we read beautiful poetry and great books. We feel inspired when we look at beautiful sculptures, paintings, and all types of fine art. We also respond emotionally to movies and music that touches the core of our being. Great art has the ability to make people humble and gentle with themselves and others, and consequently it increases their capacity to love.

3. Allow yourself to be moved

Those who are easily moved are happier. Let yourself be touched by small everyday things: by a flower that frames your path, the smile of a stranger you encounter, the presence of family and friends in your daily life. When you start allowing yourself to be moved by these things, you will find that you come to appreciate the wonder of each moment.

4. Visit places of worship

Anyone who walks upon a sacred place, such as a church, a temple, a shrine, or synagogue, will feel something. In a respected and well-kept place of worship there is always a great energy that permeates the space that anybody from any religion or even no religion can feel, if they allow themselves to be sensitive to it. People who allow themselves to feel something greater than the human condition tend to be humble and caring towards others. It is so easy in this busy world to become arrogant and impatient, but by visiting a sacred place we remember our spiritual side, no matter what our beliefs.

5. Keep giving thanks

When we appreciate everybody and everything in our lives, we in turn feel appreciated by all that is present within our lives. The most fulfilling

relationship is about appreciating the other person and their reciprocating feelings. Even in business relationships we tend to do more business with the people we feel good about, appreciate and like. Appreciation attracts more business.

6. Do what excites you

Excitement is a vibration of nature. If you do what excites you most, that will serve your life. When you choose the most exciting path for you, it will lead to great joy and happiness, as well as the best service to others. When you open the door of excitement in your life, you will also meet many interesting people who will keep that feeling alive in you. Your excitement will attract more opportunities, and when you go for it with full commitment, you will create higher levels of energy for yourself and those around you.

7. Follow your intuition

When you are faced with a difficult choice, follow your intuition; this is always the best way. Deep inside your heart, there is a being that knows what is right for you. Listen to your heart.

8. Give to others

There are many ways of giving and being generous. Even without money there are many things that you can give of yourself. You can start by being kind and giving gentle words and free smiles all around. You can give your friends and those around you inspirational quotes to give them support and encouragement. Many things you can give don't cost a penny.

9. Wishing people happiness

Logically minded people sometimes think that wishing and praying are worthless and don't count, but Wahei believes in the power of prayer. Thoughts have power, so they are influenced by the energy you give them. To wish good things to all around you is a blessing that you can give for free. Wahei's dream is for everyone to wish success and happiness for everyone else. In that way, one happy person will create many happy people. And one person's success doesn't mean that others will fail. Wahei's deepest wish is for all people to live happily and find true fulfillment on this planet. This doesn't necessarily mean that everybody should strive to be super-rich. There are many ways to be fulfilled.

10. Love and be loved

The purpose of life is to love and be loved. When you love, you maro-up, and when you are loved, you will also maro-up. Love in all relationships, not just the romantic kind, will raise your energy and open your heart.

The Influence of Wahei's Teachings on Ken

After I had established my financial independence, I wanted to learn how to use my money more meaningfully. The answer that I found was to assist others. However, I then realized that I might not have enough skills and knowledge to make a significant impact on people, so I wanted to acquire more. I knew that there was no one more suitable to teach me than 'the Warren Buffet of Japan' – Wahei himself. So I decided to approach Wahei and spend as much time as I could with him.

During my initial meetings with Wahei, I often asked him indirectly for investment tips and secrets about money. Wahei never gave a straightforward response, but instead he always talked about giving and serving others. While I enjoyed listening to Wahei discuss the importance of sharing (and my admiration for him certainly grew as I heard about his love and commitment to the world), I already understood these principles and had been applying them in my life for some time. I wanted him to teach me something new. I was confused. Once, I even suspected that Wahei did not want to share his "secret."

One day, I finally got the courage to ask him frankly: "Could you provide me with some tips on how to make more money? I need more in order to make a difference in the world." Wahei, with his usual smile, replied: "Well, I have been giving you tips all along!" Immediately, I felt embarrassed. While Wahei was sharing his wisdom, I had not been listening closely to his underlying philosophies. In the following days I thought about everything Wahei had talked about previously and finally understood the meaning behind his stories about sharing. Since then, my attitude towards money and the world has never been the same. I also became even more comfortable about sharing what I have and giving back to others what I have received.

When my book sales reached 3 million copies, I decided to give free seminars and lectures at several locations in Japan as a gesture of appreciation for my readers. Normally, people have to sign up in advance if they wanted to attend my seminars. During the tour, more than 10,000 people signed up at each location. As it was only possible to fit 1,000 people in the venues due to space limitations, we decided to draw names at random of people who then received an invitation, and this allowed us to arrive at the correct number.

During the tour, I encountered numerous people who told me how lucky they felt because their names were drawn. They believed that it must have been due to the positive thoughts they acquired through reading my books. Many of them thanked me greatly for holding free seminars, and some were even so emotional that they were in tears. This was an experience I had never had when I used to charge people for my seminars. I was overwhelmed with appreciation from and for my readers, and finally, I understood the great value of giving.

My deepest gratitude to Wahei Takeda, the greatest man I have ever known, for the profound and life-changing wisdom that he has given to me and, along with Janet, I have humbly passed on to you in this small book.

To dear Wahei I say, again and again, "Arigato!"

For Wisdom and Meaning, Maro Up!

by Janet Bray Attwood

Don't you love Ken Honda's writing style?! As I read the section you just finished for the first time, I thought, "Wow! It's no wonder he's a bestselling author so many times over." Ken's writing is simple, clear and straight forward.

When I was in India interviewing over 100 of the remarkable teachers there, I met a teacher who lives in a cave near Mysore and is known simply as, "Cave Swami." One day I was visiting Cave Swami as a long line of devotees came to receive darshan (blessings) from him. He'd give each person a touch or a word and they would go happily on their way.

What blew me away was that as Cave Swami gave blessings to his students, he had a soccer match playing on the radio in the background! After the students had all left I asked him, "How can you have a soccer match going on when you are giving spiritual blessings to your devotees?" I thought it must be sacrilegious or something.

Cave Swami just smiled at me and said, "One must be oneself!"

And with those four words I received a profound teaching that has stayed with me ever since.

So, in Cave Swami's tradition, I will be myself with you as I share some of the extraordinary knowledge I've gained by spending time with Wahei Takeda.

I did a number of interviews with Wahei. I'm thrilled to share with you some of Wahei's wisdom from those talks.

Creating a Maro One World

In one of my talks with Wahei we discussed his vision. I guess when you're a billionaire, you don't dream small. Here's what Wahei shared with me about his vision for the world:

The problems people face, whether it's money, or relationships, or their health, or natural disasters like floods and hurricanes, they all come from stress. When you worry and are anxious, when you get stressed and unhappy, it creates an effect in your own life, and on those around you.

I learned this lesson long ago when I was working hard in my business. There are many worries in business and lots of travel. And I got sick . . . twice. But I knew I had brought this illness on myself. The first time I tried fighting it. When you try to get over your problems by fighting them, the heavens say, "Stop!" So when I got sick

again, I felt this illness was a symbol of love from the heavens. It's like a yellow card in soccer. You have to stop and take your time.

During that time you can stop and take stock. You can review what you've been doing and say, "Ok, maybe I need to make some changes in myself and become healthy.

That's what I did. I felt that I needed to change the way I dress; to get rid of the neckties and expensive suits. Instead I took the dress of a hanasakaji. This is an old man who makes flowers blossom. I felt that if I wear this, then it will remind me that I want to be someone who makes flowers blossom in everyone's life, to Maro Up everyone's life. I thought that by filling my life with how I can make these flowers blossom, I would not have time for worry or negativity, so then I will be healthy. And since then it has been working.

The short path to Maro-ing Up is to be thankful and to bring that into your daily life. Make it a daily ritual to thank everything. Even when something that may seem bad happens, be thankful.

When you look from the heavens and take a point of view from there, you know that everything lasts forever. So, you know we should learn everything and there are so many things to learn, and so many ways in which we can grow and become happier. This includes learning by experiencing setbacks and failures. And so I think that's the way of viewing anything that may come into your life.

When you do that, when you're grateful for everything in your life, then everything will love you back. It'll come back to you. And underneath the heavens, whatever you give comes back to you. It's a very fundamental rule. So give thanks, say arigato to people, and love will be returned to you.

We all affect each other. When collectively, people in cities or towns are worrying, then something worrisome happens. When everyone feels secure, then the whole town feels secure. People collect to themselves what they are giving their attention to.

There's a word in Japanese called "tengoku no ito" which means heaven's intention. You can imagine it like this. Little animals, such as small fish, move together collectively in the ocean. Birds as well fly together, and you can't tell who the leader is. But they move together and in different directions all at once, collectively.

In that sense, their hearts are connected. They feel each other in the moment so their movement affects the entire group and is shared. As humans, we've forgotten this inner sense. This sense is innate within humans as well.

We all have a cosmic internet inside ourselves. At a very quiet level within us we influence each other. If that influence is worry, anxiety, stress, then that's what you

see on the surface. But if that influence is of love and gratitude, then this is the influence of Maro and the whole environment is Maro-ed Up.

In a world of competition, the ego comes out. You can take this ego, this smallness away by saying “thank you,” or by doing good for another person, or by celebrating God—all these things Maro you up. Then you become a good person, a healthy and energetic person, an excited person. When you Maro Up then you become a beautiful person.

And when you Maro Up, then you create a Maro-er world, a Maro encircled world. When we gather together and Maro Up together, then we make a Maro World. This Maro World is an ideal world. There is no worry. No one hurts one another. It’s a world filled with love and gratitude. You can become whatever you want to become.

This is the world I want to open up now. I am devoting the rest of my life to it.

The Meaning of Maro Up

When I met Wahei, he told me there is a successful Japanese business owner named Funai, who deeply understands his teachings. So naturally, I had to find Funai and ask him to share with me his understanding of the meaning of “Maro Up!” Here’s what he told me:

Wahei says there are two kinds of minds in us. One is ego and the other is Magokoro, which means sincerity or true heart.

When Wahei was a child, there was a time when his family had to be evacuated from their homes. They went to a small village. The people there were very poor, but they lived with Magokoro. And in spite of the lack of wealth in this village, Wahei felt like this was Paradise.

Japan became rich economically, but most people started to lose this Magokoro and began to live only based on the small ego. In the big cities, people don’t know who lives next door to them. People shop daily at the local convenience store, yet they rarely have a heart connection with the people they see there every day.

In the business world which sometimes seems like a jungle, the strong devour the weak. Although we can win in our business competition and expand our companies, it doesn’t lead to a truly rich society.

Because Wahei had that experience of a village living from Magokoro as a boy, he realized that money just creates the illusion of wealth. As a result, even though he succeeded in business and as an investor, he was able to maintain a sense of balance.

Wahei's advice for business people and investors? You'll succeed most when your ego is 30% and your Magokoro is 70%. Then you will create good will along with money, and the result will be true riches.

What's Required to Maro Up!

I asked Funai, "What is required to become a real expert in Maro-ing Up?" He said:

The state of Maro is a state without ego. It is that state in which one is always doing what is best for the world and best for yourself at the same time. The world is yourself and yourself is the world. So you are always looking out for yourself, but it is a very big self—a self that extends to every part of creation.

To achieve this state requires releasing all the strength of holding on to your small ego. For this, it is important to release all the tension one feels, from head to toe. This is why meditation is such an important tool for anyone to be able to Maro Up.

Meditation and yoga help the mind and body to relax. They put the mind in touch with the state of Magokoro, of true heart, that dwells in each of us. Then when you come out into the world, you bring the Maro from that place into your daily life. Like Wahei, then you can help flowers blossom in everyone's life, and as you do that, you discover the flowers blossoming in your own life as well.

Even the idea of "becoming an expert" may be coming from the ego. All that is necessary is to Maro Up! every day, to say "thank you," again and again, and to help flowers blossom wherever you go. Then you will create a rich and happy life, for yourself, and for everyone else at the same time.

Wahei on Money

One day I was fortunate to have lunch with Wahei at his home. As we sat at the table with windows in the background looking out on the central courtyard of his home, I asked him how we keep money with us. Here's what he said:

Money wants to go around everywhere. When it goes to everyone, then it's very happy because, in its essence, money is love and it's good.

If you want to keep money with you for a time, celebrate money when it comes to you, give thanks for the money, acknowledge the happiness this money is bringing and will bring to you. The people who make money are the people who light up society.

Money doesn't belong to anyone. The only money I can say I own is the money in my wallet. I have no idea what money is in my bank account because I can't see it. It's

just numbers. Maybe that money turns into real estate, or stock, or other things I own. Money always changes forms into something else that isn't money.

It's all in the heart. If your heart loves money and treats money precious, then money will be drawn to you. When you treat money as the light of love, when you appreciate the money that you have, this is how you keep money flowing to you.

I believe that people who don't have money have a belief that they don't need money. Maybe they believe they don't need money to be happy, or to have love, or maybe they believe that people who have money are greedy, or bad people. Then why would they want to have money?

But if their hearts change into hearts that like money, that welcome money, then money starts moving in their direction. Money will start coming to you when you want to use it, not just for yourself, but for others. Money won't come in your direction unless you want to use it for others.

When you're working, your customers won't give you money unless you make them happy. So to have money you have to think about how you can satisfy them, how can you make them happy?

You need your initial capital in order to make your customers happy. You have to have something to give them that will make them happy. So you think about how you can use this capital, how you can invest it to make your customers happy and how you can spend your money happily for your customers. That's when the money starts moving in your direction.

Money is born all over the place. It just keeps remaking itself. Money is really energy. It shows how wealthy you are inside.

When you look at the GNP (Gross National Product) it shows how much wealth that country has within. It also shows how much that country has done for other countries.

I'm very concerned about Japan. If we keep up the way we have been going, the finances in Japan are going to collapse. We're going to go bankrupt.

The price of things changes when the value of trust changes. When a country goes bankrupt, it means the country has lost the trust of all the people in the country. When that happens, products don't move, money doesn't move. Our economy grows and thrives as a result of products moving.

This is what I'm concerned about and I want to make myself useful in preventing a collapse. That's why I'm always Maro-ing up, and I teach that if you are just trying to gain things, it's going to make things worse. You have to give if you want something in return.

Wahei on Passion

We were born into this world to create.

In Japanese, the word for passion is “jonetsu” which includes the idea of passion and action as well. This is the energy to create and how to create. Because you are the creator, you should create the things you are passionate about.

But many people haven’t ever experienced being passionate when it comes to their work. Maybe they’ve felt passion when they went to a baseball game or a soccer game, but they can’t make a living at that. So what do you do if there are things you’re passionate about, but they’re not your work?

For these people, I’d like them to know they need to Maro Up! That means to clean yourself up inside. Then your senses become more aligned.

Initially we are all Maro. We all have pure hearts to begin with. If you look inside your body, even physically, you see that it’s all moving until the day we die. Naturally, you’re all Maro.

But then as you grow up and you experience things outside that are not Maro, you need to protect yourself from those things. So the ego comes up to protect you. But as ego grows, the Maro becomes smaller. Then you try to control people and situations and that doesn’t work very well.

So the stronger your ego, you need to make your Maro even stronger. You need to empower your Maro even more, otherwise all your actions will become power based, trying to control, which will lead to conflict and unhappiness.

If you lose your Maro, you lose the power to create. To do things that resonate in your heart, things you’re passionate about, means to develop the Maro path. Then it becomes impossible to do things you don’t want to do.

When you Maro Up! you can no longer do what you don’t want to do. It’s just an automatic thing. When you’re following your ego, there’s a part of you that knows it can’t work. But when you follow Maro, you know you can’t fail.

So if you want to live a passionate life, all you have to do really, is Maro Up!

When you do this, you come to realize you’re just creating the things the heavens want you to create. Your passion, your creation is for the heavens. This is our true nature. When you’re living without ego, then this is just your natural way of living.

There is that saying that we are made in the image of God. God made us in his image so we can do his work instead of him. Heaven is not far away. Heaven is inside us. Our heaven and our destiny lie within our own Maro, within our own true heart.

This is how humans are constructed. To connect with that, it's just a matter of being grateful. To thank the heavens and be thankful for this feeling of excitement, of passion.

There are fields of flowers and there are piles of trash as well. Both are there. The path you take is up to you. People who are drawn to go to the flower fields, these are Maro people. People who want to go to the piles of trash are the ego people.

So you have a choice. You can decide with your Maro, with your true heart, or with your ego. The choice is up to you. Based on your choice you will either enjoy the fields of flowers or the piles of trash.

Wahei on Destiny

The entire world has a destiny, structured in time. There's a cycle to time. The earth goes around the sun at a certain speed. Those cycles affect the cells in our bodies that are moving through their own cycle.

This destiny, structured in time, is unique to each of us. At the deepest level, we all know our personal destiny, but when you're in a state of ego, you start losing sight of it. Then you can only see yourself, you can't see others or their needs, and so you can see your destiny as designed by the heavens, which sees all. The heavens designed your destiny for the good of all, but when you are driven by the ego, you lose sight of the whole.

It's because of your heavenly destiny that you're unique. But the ego just thinks it's unique, not realizing that this uniqueness is given to you by the heavens to fulfill your destiny.

When you find yourself complaining about things, this is the ego trying to protect itself. "I don't like myself. I don't like my body. I don't like my hair. I don't like this and I don't like that." The ego is trying to say everything in this world is outside of me. In this way, the ego protects itself by putting everything that is wrong outside of itself.

The heavens won't help this person because they aren't being thankful.

It's easy to turn this around. Just give thanks, to the heavens and to excitement or passion. This raises your virtue because you're in alignment with the heavens and now the heavens will support you. Then you have the ability to help others, to make others happy. Then your virtue, or your deserving ability, continues to increase, because we only get what we deserve.

Waku Waku is excitement, or joy within your body. This equates with passion in English. This is what gives direction to your action. That's why I never do anything

that doesn't excite me. That excitement, that passion, is guiding you to fulfill your destiny.

Three things will lead you to success:

- 1) Create your Tengoku, which in English means living your heavenly destiny
- 2) Waku Waku which is excitement or passion
- 3) Kansha which is gratitude, giving thanks

When you're in this spirit, everyone wants to help you.

In Conclusion

After my first meeting with Wahei, Ken asked me: "Did Wahei burn you?"

"Huh?" I answered, giving him a weird look. I wasn't sure what he meant.

"Did Wahei burn you?" Ken again asked.

"Oh! You mean, did I feel like I was once again in the company of the enlightened, and he was purifying the heck out of me?"

I stopped for a moment, reflecting on my time with Wahei.

"Yup! He definitely burned me."

And that was my experience every time I was with Wahei. Being in his presence is immensely purifying and any negativity just gets burned away.

Around Wahei, I felt my heart and mind readjusting. Most of the time, while the readjusting was going on, it wasn't really that comfortable. You've heard the saying, "it takes a thorn to remove a thorn?"

It's hard to put my experience with Wahei in words, because in all my 60+ years on this earth, the only time I ever felt a similar experience, was when I was with the great teacher, Maharishi Mahesh Yogi, who brought the Transcendental Meditation technique to the West. This is saying a lot because anyone who has read *The Passion Test* knows that I've spent time with many very enlightened teachers.

I had the great privilege of traveling and being part of Maharishi's international staff in the early 1970's.

Before my time with Maharishi, I'd spent a couple of years fully immersed in the "flower child" culture of Haight-Ashbury in San Francisco, California. During that time, I plunged head on into the renaissance that was taking place there.

We were all looking for a different experience of life. We didn't know it, but we were looking for what Wahei talks about as a Maro One World. Not knowing any better, my friends and I used hallucinogenic drugs to find a deeper meaning to life. I've never been one to go halfway so I probably did more than the recommended dose. One day when I heard what I thought were the nerve endings in my brain frying, I decided maybe this wasn't my path to Nirvana.

Not long after that, my brother John introduced me to the Transcendental Meditation technique. From the first meditation, I knew I had found what I'd been searching for. After about a year of meditation, a friend suggested I apply for Maharishi's staff in Majorca, Spain, and so I did.

I arrived in Spain and when asked if I could cook, I replied, "Of course!" even though I'd never cooked much more than a fried egg. Somehow I survived, cooking for Maharishi's teacher training courses and three months later, Maharishi moved the whole course to Fiuggi, Italy.

During that time, I remember sitting on the side of the stage as Maharishi talked eloquently about the deeper meaning of life. While he was speaking, as soon as I sat down, my head felt like it was on fire. For the whole time I was sitting there near him, it was as if I could physically feel my brain being re-wired.

During that time with Maharishi, he explained that the thing that prevents most people from living up to their potential is stress. You get in a car accident, a dear one dies, you fail an exam or are just under a great deal of pressure and these experiences create stress in the body that is stored in your cells. That stress prevents the body and mind from functioning as they were meant to.

As a result, instead of enjoying the happy, grateful life each of us was meant to live, we suffer and get sick. Maharishi often talked about how meditation helps to eliminate that stress in the system so the body and mind can again function as they were designed to. But he also said that when one is around a very pure soul, just being in their presence has this same purifying influence.

When I'm around Wahei, that's my experience. There is such purity in Wahei that just being near him creates a change in the way you experience life.

During one of my visits with Wahei, I'd invited my Passion Test Master Trainers to join me. After Wahei had shared his incredible insights and knowledge for many hours with all of us, I turned to my trainers and said, "Let's share our appreciation ritual with Wahei."

One by one, each of my trainers told Wahei what they loved and appreciated about him. When my turn came, I looked straight into Wahei's eyes, and immediately a flash of emotion enveloped me. Like a flash flood, crocodile tears came streaming down my face. The emotions were so strong I could hardly get my breath. All I could

do was be with this huge wave of emotion (and purification) that was obviously going on. When finally I was able to speak, I told Wahei what I was feeling in these words . . .

“Thank you Wahei for being the blessing that you are.

“Thank you for the pure knowledge that you so generously bestow on everyone who is fortunate enough to know you.

“Thank you for being so generous with your sweet, gentle heart and loving spirit.

“Thank you for seeing the good in all.

“Thank you, Wahei, Thank you for you.

“Thank you for being a teacher who is living their teaching. “

Wahei, thank you for allowing Ken and me to share some of your profound wisdom in this e-book. May it open the hearts and minds of all who read it and create the ground for the Maro One World you envision for all of us.