A Complete Guide to the Core Principles

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Letter from Emi Kiyota, Ibasho Founder

"The time to be happy now, the place to be happy is here, and the way to be happy is to make other people happy." I found this quote when I was working on a senior housing project for Buddhist monks. It resonated with me because it captures the gap between our current approach to elder care and what elders want. Everyone wants to be useful to others regardless of their age, physical or cognitive capacities. Ibasho Nepal created a safe place for a diverse group of people, including people of different genders and socioeconomic backgrounds. "We never really sat with men to discuss community issues," one member of Mahila Samuha, the women’s group, told me. We also tried to integrate the Old Age Home into the village. It was quite isolated, but nowadays they hold village activities in their community room. Multigenerational interactions are important for sustaining traditions. The whole village seems to be interested in retaining the Nepali culture and rituals. As people age what is important changes. Ibasho provides a place for people to share what they know with the next generation.

Artist’s Statement

The paintings on the cover and in this booklet were made using alcohol inks. I brought alcohol inks to Ibasho Nepal to use in an art project for the Matatirtha villagers. I chose alcohol inks because they are portable, colorful and playful; we blew through straws to create surprising combinations and patterns. The experience blew me away. As we passed the inks around the Old Age Home, full of life—from little kids, to students, to interns, to visitors, to amas—we got to know each other. As the paintings came to life we saw each other’s dignity and artistry, regardless of age or cognitive difference. The finished paintings reflected not only the individual spirit but the interconnectedness of Ibasho. In that moment I experienced an epiphany of sorts—brought on by the multigenerational, creative harmony. It struck me that the Ibasho model is special. It can change our world.

Namaste,
Rowena Richie, author and illustrator

कलाकारोंको बयान

पुस्तिकाको आवरणका चित्रहरू रस्सी मसिबाट बनाइएका हुन । मैले रस्सी मसी मातातिथिका गाउँले बनाइएका कला परिक्रमनामा प्रयोग गर्ने ईबाशो नेपालमा त्याएकी थिए। मैले रस्सी मसी छनोट गर्नुका कारण थी मसी सजिले एक ठुंठाउ अर्को ठाउँ लाम सकिने साथै रंग र रंगहरूको धरार हो; हामीले यस पार्थिव पिँदा सुबटके आकाशकालिक संघर्षकर र दोस्त बनाउँ । यो अनुभवहरू मेरो होस नै उदायो। हामीहरूले नेपालको मसी एककारको साथ, पूर्ण जीव बातबाटिककर्ता, विद्याधर, प्रशिक्षक, आधुनिक, एककारकहरू र आधुनिककर स्त्रीका एककारक भए। चित्रहरू जीवन बन्दा हामीले एककारको गरिन्छ र कलाकारको देखिए, उमेस र बौद्धिक भित्रता भएको। बनिस्थानको चित्रहरूले केवल विविधता भनाइएका भएको। यस क्षमा मसी एककारको धरा र धर्मकर सदासु एक प्रकारको सङ्कर गराउँ। यसले मसी चैत गराउँ। किसिमहरूले नै ईबाशो मोडेल विशेष छ । यसले हाम्रो संसार परिवर्तन गर्न सक्दछ।
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The eight Ibasho core principles were developed by Dr. Emi Kiyota and Dr. Allen Power during Dr. Kiyota’s Bellagio Residency fellowship program, which was funded by the Rockefeller Foundation.

विश्व बैंकको “लोबल प्यासिटिटी फर डिसास्टर एंड रिकम्बरी” कम्युनिटी रेसिल्यन्स कार्यक्रम र जापान-वॉल्ड बैंक प्रोग्राम फर मैस्ट्रीमिंड डिसास्टर रिस्क म्यानेजमेंट इन डेमेलिक्ड कॉन्स्ट्रक्षन्सको आर्थिक सहयोगमा सभ्बत भागबैको कार्यक्रममा यो प्रतिवेदन आयारित छ। टॉक्योवर्किंग विश्व बैंक डिसास्टर रिस्क म्यानेजमेंट हबले प्राविधिक सहयोग प्रदान गरेको थियो।

हामी मातातिथिको समुदाय, ईबाशो नेपालका वृद्ध सदस्यहरू, मातातिथि वृद्धाधिकार, मातातिथि कुण्ड, उमेश थिमाल, एलेक्स श्रेख, ओसामु सासा, टार्न प्लार्सन, क्यारिसा कोनेली, मायु टाकेदा, एल्स बाइडेन मीस्ज, मोनिक विजेंटिज अल्ट्राभोग र एलिज नक्षिकित्यन्द्राका ईबाशो योजनाको प्राथिक पार्थ हुँदै गर्दै प्रदान गरिएका उदार सहयोग र सहकार्यका लागि आभारी छौँ। साथै, स्थानीय समुदायकर्ता बिहानी सोशल भेल्नर र संतोषी राणालाई विशेष धन्यवाद गर्दैर सिहिन ।

डा. एमी कियोटाको बेलागियो आबासिक “फेलोशिप” कार्यक्रम, रकफेरार फाउंडेशनबाट प्राप्तिजत, को सम्यमा ईबाशोका आठ प्रमुख सिद्धांतहरू डा. कियोटार डा. एलेक्स पावरद्वारा विकस भएका थिए।
Ibasho is a Japanese word meaning a place where one feels at ease and a place where one has a role to play.

But Ibasho is more than a place. It is a community that focuses on the benefits of a multigenerational, self-governing approach.

In Ibasho communities elders take leadership roles, rather than being thought of as old folks who need to be taken care of.

Ibasho sources its strength from its members’ ideas and contributions.
Elders have a world of experience to offer.

We need to pay attention.
We need to take action.
We need elder wisdom.

We need Ibasho.
It feels good to say it. It stretches the mouth wide open.

भन्दा वा उच्चारण गर्दा राम्रो महसूस हुन्छ। यसो गर्दा तन्किएर मुख फराकिलो भई खुल्दछ ।
देखा वा हेदा पनि आन्दोल महसूस हुन्छ। मनलाई र मस्तिष्कलाई तक्काएँ फराकिलो बनाउँदछ।
All Ibasho communities are founded on the same core principles. But every Ibasho is unique based on the qualities and concerns of each particular place.

सबै ईबाशो समुदायहरूको स्थापना उही प्रमुख सिद्धान्तहरूमा आधारित हुनछन्।
तर प्रत्येक ईबाशोको गुणहरू र चासोहरू सम्बन्धित स्थान अनुसार नौलो हुनछ।

Matatirtha, Nepal Ibasho
मातातिथ्र, ईबाशो नेपाल

Ormac, Philippines Ibasho
ओर्माक, ईबाशो फिलिपिन्स
In the country of Nepal, in the Valley of Kathmandu, in the village of Matatirtha Ibasho hubs dot the landscape like dabs of paint on a palette.
Ibasho hub: The Garden Farm built by Matatirtha

Ibasho elders

ईबाशो जमघट स्थल: बगैँचा तथा तरकारी खेतमा मातातिथिका
जेष्ठ नागरिकहरुले निर्माण गरेका ठहरा।
On any given day there are a variety of roles to play including gardener, knitter, jewelry and sign maker, construction worker, cook, teacher, musician, dancer, and artist. Daily opportunities to work with your hands and your heart.

हर बखङ विभिन्न किसिमका भूमिका निर्वाह गर्नु पर्दछ, जस्तै: मालिको काम, बुझे, गर-गहना र साइन बनाउने, निर्माणको काम, खाना पकाउने, पढाउने, संगीत तथा नृत्य सिकाउने र कलाकारिता गर्न। आफ्नो हात र मनले काम गर्न दिनहुँ अवसर पाउँछन्।
There are 8 Ibasho core principles. Every Ibasho community assigns a color to each core principle through a collective decision-making process. Making decisions as a group is one of the core principles:

**Community Ownership**

A shared sense of ownership means a shared sense of pride.

The Ibasho community in Matatirtha chose yellow to represent this principle. The bamboo yellow Hub is a reminder.
Appreciating the experiences and contributions of elders is another core principle: 
**Elder Wisdom**
When elders give to their communities they feel honored and engaged.

To represent this principle Matatirtha chose red, the color of vermilion paste applied to foreheads as a symbol of good luck and a mark of celebration.

यो सिद्धान्त प्रतिनिधित्व गर्न मातातिथि समुदायले रातो रड, सिन्दुर को रड छानेको थियो। सिन्दुरलाई भाग्यमानी हुनु र खुशी मनाउनुको प्रतिक मानिन्छ।
Green, the color of the big shady trees over chautaris, was chosen to represent the principle:

**Culturally Appropriate**

Ibasho is where we can discover and share cultural treasures and traditions with each other.

यो सिद्धान्तको लागि चौतारीको ठुलो छाँयादार रुखको प्रतिनिधित्व गर्दै हरियो रङ छानिएको थियो:

साँस्कृतिक उपयुक्तता।

साँस्कृतिक सम्पत्ति तथा रितिरिवाजहरूको खोज तथा आविष्कार गर्ने र ती सम्पत्तिहरूलाई प्रशारण तथा वितरण गर्ने ठाउँ ने ईबाशो हो।
Here, blue was chosen for the principle:

**Multigenerational Connections**

Wisdom is transferred through interactions among people of all ages.

यस सिद्धांतको लागि निलो छानिएको थियो:

**बहु–पुस्ता सम्बन्ध।**

समुदायमा सबै पुस्ताका व्यक्तिहरू सहभागिता गराइप्पुष्ट।

सबै उमेरका मानिसहरुका बिचमा अन्तरक्रिया माफि ज्ञान आदानप्रदान हुन्छ।
Gold, the color of hay that is grown, harvested, and sold, was chosen for:

Self-sustaining

Communities flourish when the people, environment, and economy are in harmony.
Black was chosen to represent the principle:  

Demarginalization

Ibasho communities foster a sense of purpose and belonging regardless of age, ability or background.

यो सिद्धान्तको लागि कालो रड छानिएको थियो:  
बहिष्करणमुक्त  
उमेर, क्षमता र पृष्ठभूमि नहेरी ईबाशो समुदायले उद्देश्य र समबन्धको एउटा भावना उत्पन्न गर्दछ।
Orange was chosen to represent:

Embracing Imperfection

Because life is forever changing. Embrace change gracefully, authentically, and at your own pace.
Ginger brown was chosen for the principle:

**Normalcy**

Ibasho is a place to gather at your leisure.

आपनो खाली समयमा अनौपचारिक जमघट गर्ने स्थान हो, ईबाशो।
Ibasho is a place to discover and share cultural traditions, to participate in making decisions, to collaborate, celebrate and create, to never stop learning from your own Ibasho family and from other Ibashos around the world, “yesterday, today, tomorrow and the day after tomorrow.”

Matatirtha, Nepal Ibasho
मातातिथ्र, ईबाशो नेपाल

“We made alcohol ink paintings to reflect Ibasho’s core values. हामीले रङीन मसीको प्रयोग गरी ईबाशोका प्रमुख मुल्यमान्यताहरु विचित्र मा झेल्छ।”

Ormac, Philippines Ibasho
ओर्माक, ईबाशो फिलिपिन्स

“hijo, azuh, boli, pursi.”
“हिजो, आज, भोिल र पसी”
The Ibasho 8 Principle Dance

Ibasho is a dance: a dance between members with different perspectives; a dance between principles always respected.

Elder Wisdom: the first move in the Ibasho dance. Place your hands, palms facing out, in front of the heart and slowly extend the arms, passing wisdom from the heart.

Multigenerational Connections: the second move in the Ibasho dance. Palms facing down in front of your chest, slowly curve your hands out and down as if you have an expectant mother’s belly.

Community Ownership: the third move in the Ibasho dance. Return the hands to the palms-facing-down position in front of the chest and slowly lengthen the arms forward and to the sides reaching out towards everyone along the horizon.

Culturally Appropriate: the fourth move in the Ibasho dance. Place the palms together in prayer or namaste mudra in front of the heart, also known as Anjali mudra in Sanskrit.

Self-sustaining: the fifth move in the Ibasho dance. Start in Anjali mudra, circle the hands down and away from each other until they rejoin in Anjali mudra, balancing right and left, masculine and feminine.

Demarginalization: the sixth move in the Ibasho dance. Sweep one arm up, gathering everyone in that direction. Then the other arm, gathering everyone in that direction. Arms end overhead in a big circle.

Embracing Imperfection: the seventh move in the Ibasho dance. Drawing all the imperfect effort down into yourself, slowly lower arms to palms-facing-down position in front of the heart.

Normalcy: the eighth and final move in the Ibasho dance. Simply lower your arms to tadasana or mountain standing pose.
Biography

In 1996 Emi Kyotō visited her grandma in a nursing home in Japan. Her grandma had always been perky and wise, but she had a memory problem and checked herself into a nursing home. Emi went to visit her and saw she was nothing but a number there. Grandma lost her zest for life. That really motivated Emi to help elders have opportunities to feel useful. That’s how Ibasho was started. Emi is very interested in learning from Nepali elders and sharing their community spirit with the rest of the world.

Bihani
On 25th April 2015, Nepal suffered from a massive earthquake where the elderly were among the most affected—both physically and mentally. It was during the post-earthquake phase that Ibasho was invited to replicate its model in Nepal by Bihani Social Venture. Ibasho provided technical assistance in order to benefit elders who were affected and in February 2018, Ibasho Nepal was formally registered as a not for profit with support from the team at Bihani. Established in 2013, Bihani Social Venture is Nepal’s first social enterprise working in the field of ageing. Bihani works towards addressing societal barriers and exclusions based on age thereby fostering communities that are inclusive of senior citizens in an environment that enables active ageing and living with dignity. Bihani’s innovative and diverse services and activities related to health, social engagement and participation, and organisational development promote the formation of new bonds and exchange of knowledge/capacities across generations.

Yasushiros Tanaka was born in Kyoto and lives in Ofunato, Japan where he is the director of Ibasho Japan. The experience of supporting the Ibasho elders taught him that once you start interacting with older people and become friends with them, you no longer think about the fact that they’re older. You just see them as people.

Alex Kornhuber is a photographer from Lima, Peru. He felt a deep connection to the country of Nepal and found the people to be peaceful, spiritual and brotherly to each other. As a photographer he felt welcomed and at home, and was able to document truthfully and with openness the lives of the Nepalese. Kathmandu reminded him of the Peruvian Andes.

In the summer of 2019 Rowena Richie travelled to Ibasho communities in Nepal, Japan and the Philippines with Emi, Alex and Hiro.

Rowena created the Ibasho dance to help herself, and others, remember the 8 core principles. Rowena and Alex—“Rolex”—produced most of the artwork and photos in this booklet to capture the beautiful spirit of Nepal. Special thanks to Rowena’s daughter Skyla Frauenheim, age 14, who painted the cat and the big mouth. And to Emi and Hiro for their vision and generosity.