

Pass It On®...

Finding Our Way.

Using the natural elements around her, Kala Baybayan Tanaka navigates the ocean in a canoe for up to three weeks using nothing but observations of the natural elements around her.

Kala has deep ties to her Hawaiian roots. Her ancestors navigated the oceans for centuries using their knowledge of the stars, the sun, the currents and the wind. It's not that she does it without technology, but rather uses the natural technology around her. It's called Wayfinding, and was taught to her by her father. "My father was my foundation, my rock," she says of her first voyage with him from Oahu to Lahaina in a traditional canoe "I knew we would be OK." He taught her how to read the stars, the ocean swells and how to use them to hold the course. Over 200 stars have specific names and purposes when you are Wayfinding. You have to look at each and determine if they are rising or setting. "You know that this is this star and the direction it represents," Kala says. "If you can do that, you can use it as a tool to orient."

During the day, Kala uses the sun until it hits a certain height, when she gets closer to land she looks for certain species of land birds and stationary clouds that indicate there is land below. When Kala sails she feels "very connected to my past and where I came from. I feel very connected to the crew and the canoe. We're a family." The longer voyages require Kala to spend hours studying the day and the night skies. It was demanding, physical work. But it also had its moments of awe. For Kala, the beauty is in tying together the past and the present to enjoy the moment. So when she is not sailing, she is teaching Wayfinding skills to school-aged children in hopes of preserving the skills her ancestors relied on.

It's easy to get lost in the immediacy of the technology of our day, to be consumed by screens and miss the nature that unfolds around us. But if we will take the time to look up, to see the stars and the sun, the way the clouds move, the miracle of life beneath and above us, we will discover something deep inside us, something that will always lead to happiness.

Find Your Way...[PassItOn.com](https://www.PassItOn.com)

By The Foundation for a Better Life®

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