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Create your Kipuka

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Kilauea is an active volcano on the Big Island of Hawai'i where I live; she has been erupting and sending rivers of molten lava to the sea continually since 1983. (I say "she" for in Hawaii legend attributes our volcanic eruptions to the goddess Pele.)

In the earlier years of her eruption, Kilauea did quite a bit of damage to homes, forests and wildlife. However now, something wonderful is happening. Something bountiful. Kilauea has stopped taking, and started to give back.

Since claiming her fiery path to the sea, and as her lava continues to flow, Kilauea has begun to give us the gift of creation Her eruption shows no sign of stopping, and I suspect it will be many years beyond our lifetime before the vast landscape of glistening black rock left in the lava's wake becomes hospitable and inhabitable again. However meanwhile, we bear witness to the very birth of the land itself. The land mass of our island has grown substantially in these past twenty three years.

As the lava flows to our ocean it chooses a certain path; it does not cover everything as a heavy rainfall might sheet a window. Within the areas of destruction burned and scarred by the slowly advancing lava there are these pockets of land which are spared. The trees and wild grasses continue to grow there, and while some other plants may succumb to the surrounding heat, because the ground itself was untouched the soil remains fertile, and new growth will begin fairly quickly. Birds find refuge in the trees of these older land pockets, and it is their song which you first hear. Upon closer inspection, you discover these spared sections of land are teeming with life.

We call these oases of vegetation **kipuka**. They beckon all life to return to their nourishment so that life can thrive again. They are places of hope and of promise; of survival. They are tranquil places of calm and serenity. They are places of preserved histories which hold the seeds for renewed beginnings.

Some will swear that when you sit quietly within a kipuka and look to the skies, you will see images in cloud formations you have never seen before, for the land was spared to connect all on earth to the heavens. It is true that the kipuka get the most rainfall, for they attract our tropical rain clouds like magnets pulled into their verdant green targets.

Many island watermen use the word kipuka as well. They refer to a calm place in high seas where rolling swells seem to part for their canoe, or deep places in a shoal where they can find the prized pāpio playing when they are fishing.

Within our lives, we all have kipuka. They are our havens and safe harbors. They are those places where we feel we are our best, where we have the most energy, and where we can be our most resilient selves. They are those places where we feel creative, and we seem to get our best ideas. Within our kipuka we feel a kind of abundance, knowing there are so many new possibilities just waiting to emerge.

Every workplace, and every home should be a kipuka, a place conducive to having the very best in us take root in fertile soil, so it will continue to grow and flourish. However in our case, nature may not provide them for us as she does in the lava fields of The Big Island. We have to create them.

Imagining your best possible kipuka, and committing to creating it, could well be the most important thing you ever do for yourself. A place where you enjoy learning and growing. A place where it seems you always get your best ideas. A place where you give birth to who you are meant to be.

Better yet, **you** can be the kipuka. You can be the one who provides the nourishment others need to they can prosper and

thrive. It's a good goal to write for ourselves, don't you think?

Rosa Say is the author of [Managing with Aloha, Bringing Hawaii's Universal Values to the Art of Business](#). Rosa is the founder and head coach of [Say Leadership Coaching](#), a company dedicated to bringing nobility to the working arts of management and leadership. She also writes online at [the Talking Story blog](#).

Rosa's Previous Thursday Column was: [Literal Life Hack: Cut your window of time in half](#).





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