

Narrator: Ed Ebisui Junior and Ed Ebisui,III, share more than just a name. They share a lifelong passion for fishing that has spanned three generations.

Ed Ebisui, Sr.: I've always fished since I was a kid. My dad had a wooden sampan that I remember from about the late '50s I started bottom fishing I believe around middle to late '80s, 1980s. I got the boat that I presently have about 1985, and thereafter started bottom fishing.

Ed Ebisui, Jr.: I was always into fishing because of my father and I guess my grandfather. But my father, when I told my dad I was going to be a commercial fishermen, he was pissed. And I told him, you know what, Dad, I'm not going to be rich, I know that, but I'm going to be happy. And it's something that I still struggle with to this day, thinking maybe I made the wrong choice. But at the end of the day, I think it's just what makes you happy and who knows, might have to find another -- another job sometime, but never going to quit fishing. I mean, it's always going to be part of me and part of my income, for sure. But yeah, it started off, you know, my father and Kurt would go fishing every weekend, and I would get sick like a dog, but I don't know why I would still -- I would still go. Any time I'm around water, that's the first thing I want to do, is look for fish and how I'm going to catch it, how does the fish taste, like even when I travel still.

Narrator: Like others before him, Ed Junior learned the basics from established fishermen who were willing to share their knowledge.

EE Sr.: An old friend named James Yu, you know, I was always interested in learning how to bottomfish. So I approached him one day and asked him to take me and another friend, Jimmy Cullen, fishing and showing us how, showing us what he knew, and he did that, and that got us started. Then shortly after that, I hooked up with Kurt, and Kurt had a lot of experience fishing Northwestern Hawaiian Islands, Main Hawaiian Islands bottom fishing.

EE Jr.: It's hard to start, like, from scratch with no knowledge.

EE Sr.: Yeah. I think it would be extremely difficult to try and learn it on your own. You know, where and how.

EE Jr.: I mean, it's a tremendous amount of knowledge that, you know, my father and Kurt and Jimmy Yu could pass down, and it would be a complete waste if I couldn't do it. James Yu, who he learned from, is actually still around and I still see him at the harbor and, you know, talk story with him. Still, there's always an exchange of ideas because you're never going to figure . . . you're never going to master it. You can, you know, be pretty productive at it, but you'll never master it. As soon as you think you know everything, you realize you don't. Little techniques that you pick up from other people, you've got to adapt and try new things.

Narrator: Ed Junior and his son outlined characteristics that are an essential part of being a skilled fisherman.

EE Sr.: I think it's skill, perseverance. Patience . . . critical. Absolutely critical.

EE Jr.: There's a lot of things. Currents. You've got to have a good understanding of currents, the movement of the fish. And you know, it's -- I'll never know when -- you know, when the fish are going to be in a certain area all the time. You've just got to go and you've got to scout it out. And scouting is very, very, very important. There's some fishing trips where if I know it's not being too productive, I'll just say, you know what, I'll just quit the fishing at this point, and then put time in in scouting. And it may not pay off on that trip, but it will pay off in the end.

Narrator: Knowledge and experience isn't the only thing they share. While it's important to recover the cost, Ed Junior and his son always consider those who can't fish for themselves.

EE Sr.: But for me, you know, not being true commercial, first priority was to make sure that we had enough to take home and to give friends and relatives, that was number one priority. If there's fish over and above that, then that went to the auction. But like, for example, Christmas and New Years, we made special trips for nothing but give away the entire load.

EE Jr.: A lot of other fishermen tell me I give away too much fish, but I figure it just kind of goes along with the -- with the job. Since we live Haleiwa, it's -- you know ... if I catch less than 50 pounds or 80 pounds . . .and -- you, know . I know it's -- a lot of times it's still worth a lot of money, sometimes it's not worth the trip to town to drop it off. So that's when and if the prices are low at the time and you've got to kind of weigh it out in your head, like, you know what, if the price are a little low right now, I don't have that much, now is a good time to take care of . . . take care of people that take care of you.