

## December 2019 ArizOTA Journal Club Article Summary

Title: **The Kawa model: The power of culturally responsive occupational therapy**

Publication: Disability and Rehabilitation

Citation: Iwama, M. K., Thomson, N. A., Macdonald, R. M. (2009). The kawa model: The power of culturally responsive occupational therapy. *Disability and Rehabilitation*, 31(14), 1125-1135. DOI: 10.1080/09638280902773711.

**Purpose of study:** To describe the Kawa Model's origins, basic concepts, principles, underlying ideology and possibilities for informing a more culturally responsive rehabilitation practice.

### Method

- Type of article: Narrative review
- Assessments utilized:
  - Japanese occupational therapists utilized a qualitative research method to develop the Kawa model
- Summary of the Kawa model
  - A model for the metaphor - "Life is understood to be a complex, profound journey that flows through time and space, like a river"
  - Occupational therapy's purpose within the Kawa model is "to enable and enhance life flow by enhancing harmony"
  - Components
    - Water (Mizu) = life flow
    - Driftwood (Ryuboku) = personal assets and liabilities
    - Rocks (Iwa) = life circumstances and problems
    - River walls and floor (Kawa Zoko) = environmental factors (physical and social)

### Implications for practice

- For Consumers
  - The Kawa model is a non-Western framework to explore the experiences of life and identify
- For Practitioners
  - The Kawa model should be adapted to meet the needs of the client in a meaningful way
  - The authors expressed that the occupational therapy practitioner using the Kawa model has full creative license
- For Administration
  - The authors of the Kawa model seek to provide a non-Western framework alternative to provide inclusive methods of providing health care services to persons who do not identify with mainstream Western ideologies