Proudly Supported by:

The 8IATC received funding from the Australian Government.
Kawa – Where model meets metaphor

Helen Jeffery
What is a model?

A model is a “means of identifying and rationalising what is being observed and a set of ideas within which to frame practice decision making.” (Melton, Forsyth, & Freeth, 2009, p. 14).

Bio-Medical model – diagnosis, homeostatic imbalance, medicine or surgical intervention

Bio-psycho-social – acknowledges psychological and social impacts on health

Social model – society structures impact individuals ability to function

Health belief model – own beliefs and perceptions influence health and response to ill-health

Person Occupation Environment – many OT models based on this, function is the result of fit between these three domains

Kawa Model – metaphor, manages cultural dimension, client centred
Some practice models we might use:

- **Trans-theoretical model of change**
- **Cognitive behavioural model**
- **Behavioural model**
- **Recovery model/philosophy**
- **Experiential learning cycle**
- **Supervision models**
- **Metaphorical models**
What models do you use?

How do they influence your adventure therapy practice?
Kawa background

- More culturally responsive
- Collectivist rather than individualist
- Genuine client view
- Uses a metaphor—*kawa* means river in Japanese, a common metaphor for personal life in Japanese Culture

“An optimal state of wellbeing in one’s life or river can be portrayed metaphorically by an image of strong, deep, unimpeded flow” (Iwama, 2005a, p. 218).
Life is like a River...

(Iwama, M.K. 2006)
Water (the river) represents one’s “life energy or life flow”
Rocks - obstacles and problematic circumstances as perceived by clients.
Driftwood - one’s subjective attributes that can influence one’s life both positively and negatively
River banks and bottom - one’s physical and social environment.
The water flows in the space between obstructions, with the size of the space representing the flow of one’s life energy.
Story from practice: Group of men in a forensic mental health inpatient unit

• Punishment versus rehabilitation
• Therapeutic community model
• Volatile environment, high levels of expressed emotion
• Kawa art work over numerous sessions
• Here and now, and then future
What is a metaphor?

Metaphor is where “one thing is likened to another in such a way that the comparison throws new light on the subject.” (Bacon, 1983, p2)

Metaphor underlies or is threaded through any narrative or story, and creates meaning in personal narratives (Ganzer, 1993)

“Metaphoric transfer occurs when parallel processes in one learning situation become analogous to learning in another different, yet similar situation.” (Gass, 1991)

Metaphor can be surface and deep – both are useful, one can lead to the other.
Metaphor in psychotherapy

- May come from the client
- Collaborative development of the metaphor
- In adventure therapy may be triggered by the experience or by a therapist-generated metaphor
- Metaphor-based therapies – variety of models
- Often the therapy is the metaphorical transformation
Metaphor in occupational therapy:

• OT interested in the client in the context of their history as well as the present moment – metaphor in the narrative
• Comes from the client or the therapist
• Collaborative development of the metaphor
• May be in the form of stories/fairy tales/films
• May be used in guided expressive or projective art or media work
• Metaphor may set the problem/challenge, and therefore guide the solution or resolution
Metaphor in adventure therapy:

- Used intentionally
- Used in de-briefing processes
- Isomorphic framing, front-loading
- Provides a language to talk about other stuff
- Often different metaphoric experiences with different adventure experiences
- Metaphoric transfer - parallel processes in one learning situation become analogous to learning in another different, yet similar situation
- Often the metaphoric connections create the meaning and facilitate the change
- Experience created metaphor may enhance development of self-metaphor
How do you use metaphor?

How have you seen it used?
Story from practice: woman recovering from head injury following hit and run by drunk driver

- Rehabilitation so far
- Life changing experience
- Anger
• Anger
• The guy
• Persistent lower back pain
The guy

- Forgiveness
- Restorative justice too early
- Changed lives
- Victim impact but no offender impact statement
- The guy’s family
- The letter
- Compensation and acknowledgement
Prep → ↑ pain
Draft → ↑ pain
2nd draft → pain
Shared with therapist → pain
Tour to police → ↓ pain
Confirmation the guy has it → ↓ pain
Received compensation → no pain
Kawa in adventure therapy

- Client narrative for depicting life or situation
  - Past, present and future or aspect of this
  - Particular part of life e.g. school, recent or current adventure experience
- Shared language between group members
- Link with outdoors/nature
- Can relate to multiple adventure experiences
- Can incorporate it into frontloading
- Can incorporate it into debriefing
- Can carry into everyday life
- Can incorporate it into adjunctive one to one therapy
- May stimulate self metaphor
Diverse uses:

• Can adapt the metaphor to client base or activity
• Suits client centred practice despite collectivist basis to its development
• Developed to suit indigenous cultures
• Suits multiple practice areas, client groups and practice environments
• In your own reflective practice – use the model related to your professional life
• In team development – use Kawa for teambuilding and inter-professional collaboration
Could Kawa have a place in your adventure therapy practice? Have a go!

• Maybe yourself in your work flow
• Maybe reflect on a session or client group – could it apply?
• Maybe in small groups re the development of adventure therapy in your area
• Maybe in discipline specific groups re the use of adventure therapy in a discipline specific way
• Or whatever works for you!
Water (the river) represents one’s “life energy or life flow”
Rocks - obstacles and problematic circumstances as perceived by clients.
Driftwood - one’s subjective attributes that can influence one’s life both positively and negatively
River banks and bottom - one’s physical and social environment.
The water flows in the space between obstructions, with the size of the space representing the flow of one’s life energy.
References:


The 8IATC received funding from the Australian Government.