

Kawa Model Handout

The Kawa Model is an innovative approach in occupational therapy that uses the metaphor of a river to represent a person's unique life journey. Developed by Japanese occupational therapists, this model emphasizes culturally responsive occupational therapy by considering personal, cultural, and spiritual factors.

The Kawa Model can be used metaphorically in its original form of a river, or in its underlying form of FIVE interrelated constructs:

I. River flow

- Life flow and priorities
- The water in the river impacts every aspect of the model, representing every aspect of the patient's life

II. River banks

- Environmental, social, and physical contexts
- The river banks can either facilitate or impede the life flow

III. Rocks

- Obstacles & challenges that are barriers to optimal life flow

IV. Driftwood

- Influencing factors in a person's life flow

V. Spaces

- Opportunities for enhancing flow
 - Spaces allow for positive interactions between aspects of the life flow
-

Instructions

Use this image as a base for your patient's model. Explain to them the different components of the Kawa Model and work with them to complete the image according to their own life flow. Revisit the task at a later date and compare your client's river flow to observe and assess progress.

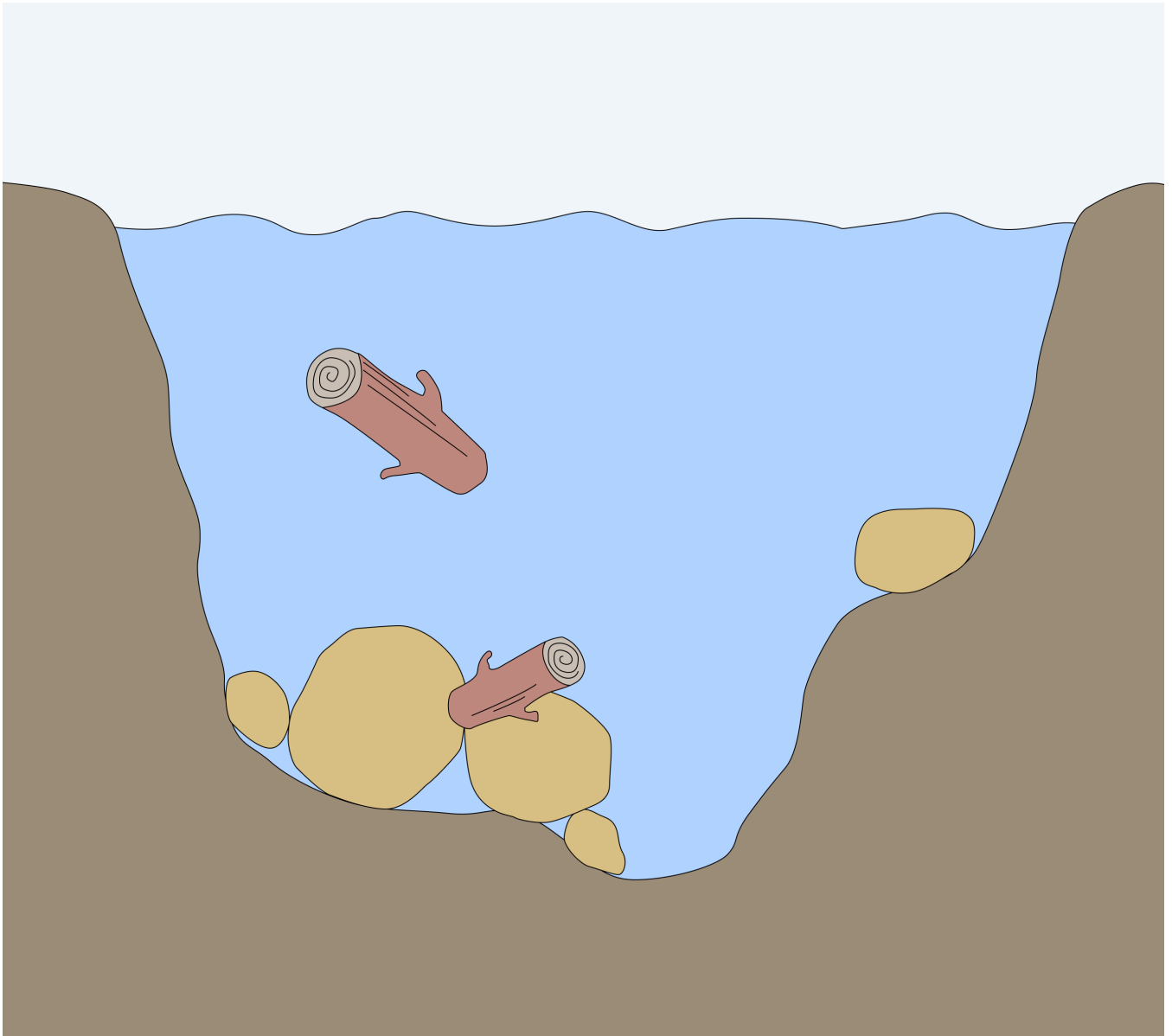


Figure 2. (n.d.). Michael Iwama. Retrieved July 29, 2024.
http://individual.utoronto.ca/michaeliwama/what_is.htm.