



NEW ZEALAND
CURRICULUM DESIGN INSTITUTE

Te Wānanga Hoahoa Mātauranga Aotearoa

An Introduction to the Universal Well-being Model (UWM)

The Universal Well-being Model (UWM) has been developed through a programme of themed literature review, theoretical and applied practice research that commenced in 2008. The UWM was designed to explain and facilitate holistic and integrated well-being enhancement(s) by youth, adult individuals, families, whānau, and teams. The UWM underpins the Universal Well-being Evaluation Tool (UWET) administered during Well-being Checks.

Who does the UWM empower?

The UWM has been designed to empower

- Youth, individuals, family, whānau and teams to enhance their well-being
- Professional Well-being Facilitators working in Well-being, Pastoral Care, and Health Education; these people underpin their practice with the UWM Practice Guidelines; and utilise the UWM Evaluation Tool (UWET) and Well-being Enhancement Planning process to optimise client well-being outcomes.

About the Universal Well-being Model

The state of human well-being is impacted by single and multiple inputs from our senses, that is, what we see, hear, smell, taste, and touch during the interactive experiences we have: within us, with others, with items or materials and our wider environment throughout our lives. Some interactive experiences we have we will be controllable and pleasant, others may be uncontrollable and challenging, such as a car accident. Humans have a conscious and unconscious drive to process and learn from the interactive experiences they have. Our survival or thriving depends on us processing and learning effectively from our interactive experiences.

Our well-being is impacted initially by 'Sensory Inputs' which we then process through one or a combination of our social, physical, intellectual, cultural, emotional or spiritual dimensions. These six dimensions should be viewed as fluid, interactive, integrated, inter-related and dynamic. The state of each dimension can be enhanced, unaffected or harmed through interactive experiences. The six human dimensions; also known as SPICES; like those we eat; flavour our interactive experiences and impact our holistic well-being. Too much or too little will impact us.

The Universal Well-being Model (UWM) explains well-being, and the 70 key evidence-based determinants (variables) that influence human well-being. The state of a person or group's well-being can be evaluated through the Universal Well-being Evaluation Tool (UWET) and then reported to youth, individuals, families, whānau or team's undertaking such Checks.

Key features of the Universal Well-being Model (UWM)

- it is holistic, and supports outcomes greater than the sum of its parts
- it is integrated, all dimensions in the model are all interlinked and interdependent
- all dimensions are of equal importance and balanced development of all is supported
- it is responsive to individual differences i.e. ethnicity, cultural, belief, sexuality, and gender
- it is designed to empower, appreciate, and support well-being enhancements

Professional Well-being Facilitators working in Well-being enhancement, Pastoral Care, and Health Education fields underpin their practice with the UWM; and administer the Universal Well-being Evaluation Tool (UWET) and UWM Enhancement Planning process to optimise and measurably enhance youth, individual, family, whānau and team well-being outcomes in diverse educational, community/iwi/mob, health, and workplaces.

The Universal Well-being Model (UWM)

(Social, Physical, Intellectual, Cultural, Emotional & Spiritual = SPICES)



(Stevenson, Gurung, & Zagala, 2022)

Universal Well-being Model Components

Sensory Input: through what we see, hear, smell, taste, and touch during interactive experiences.

Well-being Determinant Domains:

- S Social** – social interactions within i) ourselves (intra-psychological), ii) with those around us (inter-psychological) closest to us (significant others), iii) in our family/whānau, and in iv) organisations, iwi, workplaces and our community context.
- P Physical** – food, water, exercise, affection, warmth, sleep, fresh air, shelter, freedom from dis-ease, financial means, physical safety and other selected controllable physical human needs.
- I Intellectual** – our awareness, knowledge and skills related to i) our thinking styles, patterns, processes, and strategies (such as how we make decisions) and ii) learning styles, patterns, processes, and strategies we use to acquire new knowledge, skills and attitudes.
- C Cultural** – knowledge and skills that make up our ethnic and cultural intelligences and competencies plus their underpinning origins, ancestry/whakapapa of i) our genetically determined ethnicity(ies) and ii) our selected cultural ways of interacting, existing and living in the various environments that make up our world.
- E Emotional** – all aspects making up and informing our emotional intelligence. It includes awareness of our emotional landscape and repertoire, emotion identification and impacts, expression of emotions, processing and what we can and cannot regulate.
- S Spiritual** – i) the beliefs held which may or may not be religious in nature and which inform and frame interactive experience, ii) the values held and what is valued and iii) a synthesis of the beliefs and values held and which informs the attitude with which the person approaches all interactive experiences in their life.

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