

Book review



Together: Te Oranga o te Katoa

Author: Dr. Amanda Wallis, Gaynor Parkin, Arianna Rangi and Ranei Wineera-Parai.

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This pukapuka explores wellbeing using Te Whare Tapa Whā as its guide. It weaves evidence-based psychological ideas with Te Ao Māori (Māori worldview). You don't have to be well-versed in the science of wellbeing or Te Ao Māori to gain from *Together: Te Oranga o te Katoa* as the authors have succeeded in creating a practical, and digestible read.

The title and first words of *Together* highlight an important theme weaved throughout:

E hara taku toa i te toa takitahi, he toa takitini.
My strength is not as an individual, but as a collective.

Written and co-authored by psychologists and researchers at Umbrella Wellbeing Limited, the authors emphasise the power of connection to our overall wellbeing. This is common knowledge in Te Ao Māori and a refreshing reminder among the plethora of wellbeing recommendations of today. Often, wellbeing texts in western society have an individualistic focus, the linking of Te Ao Māori principles with recent scientific research sets this wellbeing pukapuka apart.

After the introduction, the book is broken up into five sections with each covering an aspect of Te Whare Tapa Whā: Te taha hinengaro (emotional), Te taha tinana (physical), Te taha wairua (spiritual), Te taha whānau (connections/relationships) and Te taiao (external environment). Whether or not you're familiar with Te Whare Tapa Whā as a wellbeing model, this book will provide the reader with in-depth wellbeing strategies, insight on recent research and actionable steps.

The structure of the book is immensely helpful, that allows the reader to either indulge the book cover-to-cover or dip in and out of relevant sections as required. Top tips and bite-sized strategies are highlighted in grey boxes demarcating it from the rest of the text. The tail of the book includes a Te reo Māori glossary and source list of each chapter for further reading.

Together would benefit individuals wanting to improve personal wellbeing as well as professionals aiming to enhance hauora (health) in their team or organisation. Team leaders, wellbeing co-ordinators and CEOs alike could add *Together* to their reference shelf.

Review by Gina Speedy, School Counsellor at Kuranui College, South Wairarapa

Disclaimer: Please note these reviews are not intended as endorsements or recommendations from the Mental Health Foundation. This feature introduces resources that may be useful for individuals with an interest in mental health and wellbeing topics.