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To jump in or not to jump in? The art of understanding how people get involved in evaluation

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The Model of Human Occupation (Kielhofner, 2002) is a conceptual model of occupational therapy practice. At first, it might have little in common with evaluation but by considering human beings in all aspects of an evaluation process it contributes to decreasing resistance to the changes brought by the results of an evaluation.

Specifically, this model explains people's motivation to get involved or not in an occupation, the importance and attachment to one's role, the routines of actions related to one's roles and the opportunities and constraints brought by the environment. By looking closely at the factors that lead people to make specific choices of occupations in their life the model provides evaluators with precious information.

The interdependence between the concepts of the model explores in depth the effects generated by different occupations. This is all the more interesting in a context where individuals are either involved in occupations such as an evaluation process or have to deal with the changes brought to their usual occupations by the results of an evaluation.

Examples of application of the Model of Human Occupation in different contexts such as the evaluation of an intervention program in mental health care facility, the implementation of a treatment approach in a community health center, the implementation of a new curriculum in a higher education institution, and the evaluation of a prevention program for elderly drivers will be presented. These examples will illustrate the flexibility of the model and the relevance of this innovative approach to evaluation.