

Walk, talk, learn and connect

Andrea Cameron, Jennifer Padaruth,
Fiona Stirling



Abertay
University®

Walk, talk, learn and connect

Context

- Covid-19
- Connectedness or lack of
- Mental wellbeing
- Sense of belonging



Walk, talk, learn and connect

Walking Pedagogies

Health benefits



Cognitive benefits, including creative and critical thinking

Oppezzo & Schwartz, 2014; Goertz, 2018

Being in, and with, nature (sensory immersion)

Lutyen, 2017; O'Neill, no date



Pre-Covid some mixed experiences of adoption

Cameron, 2019

Walk, talk, learn and connect

Walking Pedagogies

Collective
connectedness with
..... (O' Neill, no date).



'pay attention'



'learn to wonder as we wander'

Lyle, Latremouille, & Jardine, 2021

Walk, talk, learn and connect

Project Background



Session 2021/22



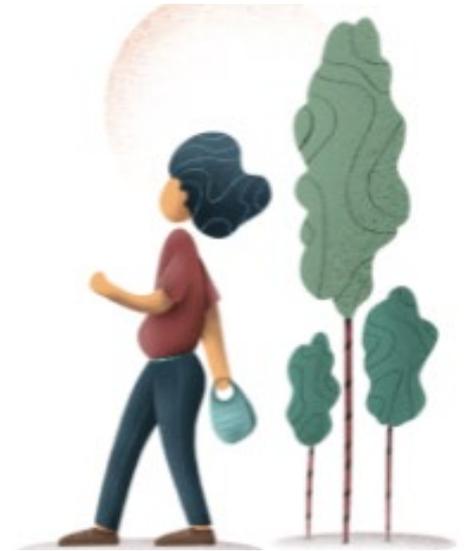
Students on 3-year part-time MSc Counselling programme



Extra-curricular tutor-led walks, mutually agreed locations – urban and rural



Research question:
Experience of participation in the walks



Walk, talk, learn and connect

Method



Institutional QAA Resilient Learning Communities funding gained to employ a research assistant to gather and analyse project data



Invite sent to all students who had had the opportunity to engage with the walking project, and those who chose not to participate



Total number of participants recruited...

Walk, talk, learn and connect

Method



Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) selected and interview questions exploring reasons for participating (or not) in the walking project generated



Interviews conducted, exploration of experiences of being a participant (n=6), or non-participant (n=2)



Transcription of interviews and analysis

Walk, talk, learn and connect

Connection to the Local Area

It did tick a lot of boxes in terms of familiarization and getting me used to coming to Dundee

it actually was really lovely to see a part of Dundee, that I probably wouldn't have explored myself. I wouldn't have known that park was just sitting up there.

Being outdoors and walking as Facilitative

There's some sort of feature of walking together that facilitates communication

a walk outdoors, you know, it's not as hard as going into a social situation like in a room or in a hall and that feeling of awkwardness

connecting with nature is like, it just soothes me it's a big part of how I look after myself and my mental health...being in nature and just nature around us and yeah, that was helpful.



Analysis Experiential Statements

Seeing Lecturers as People

It kind of helped me just see her as a human and you know, a really warm connection like that came two ways

I didn't know the tutor at all. That was really nice. As a stranger became a real person.

it's an opportunity to meet one of the lecturers and maybe sort of in a more informal setting, you know, have a bit of a more relaxed chat about stuff

An informal Relationship Building Opportunity

it wasn't about the coursework, it was more just about life, chatting

I do feel in academic situations that there's a little bit of pressure on me to sort of say something wise or relevant or whatever, whereas that's not the case when you're not in that setting, when you're just walking around

we didn't really know each other, there wasn't that kind of social chat you could get walking besides somebody or whatever. So it was nice to have that opportunity.

Walk, talk, learn and connect

Analysis Next Stages - A Tentative Look



Personal Experiential Themes

Clustering
Experiential
Statements together



Group Experiential Themes

Looking for patterns
of convergence and
divergence in the
PETS



Write Up

Stay in touch
with
participants for
clarification &
Checking

Walk, talk, learn and connect

Project - Next Steps

Finish

Finish the analysis

Explore

Explore the outcomes relative to previous work and future applications

Consider

Consider recommendations for wider adoption – guidance/infrastructure

Further

Further dissemination



Walk, talk, learn and connect

Walk and Learn today....

11 min walk

Rottenrow Gardens at
Strathclyde University



20 min walk

Glasgow Cathedral & Necropolis



25 min walk

Broomielaw, River Clyde Walkway
& Squinty Bridge



35 min walk

Glasgow Green & People's palace



Thank you

