Walk, talk, learn and connect

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Context

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

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

‘learn to wonder as we wander’
Lyle, Latremouille, & Jardine, 2021

‘pay attention’
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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
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**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...
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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.
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Analysis – Participant Language & Description
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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.

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.

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.

being in nature and just nature around us and yeah, that was helpful.

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.

Facilitative
there's some sort of feature of walking together that facilitates communication.

Analysis
Experiential Statements

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.
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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
### Project - Next Steps

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Finish</th>
<th>Finish the analysis</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Explore</td>
<td>Explore the outcomes relative to previous work and future applications</td>
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<tr>
<td>Consider</td>
<td>Consider recommendations for wider adoption – guidance/infrastructure</td>
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<td>Further</td>
<td>Further dissemination</td>
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### Walk and Learn today....

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Duration</th>
<th>Location</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>11 min walk</td>
<td>Rottenrow Gardens at Strathclyde University</td>
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<tr>
<td>20 min walk</td>
<td>Glasgow Cathedral &amp; Necropolis</td>
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<tr>
<td>25 min walk</td>
<td>Broomielaw, River Clyde Walkway &amp; Squinty Bridge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35 min walk</td>
<td>Glasgow Green &amp; People's palace</td>
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Thank you