

## **Walk and Talk Therapy: Out of Place?**

### Overall purpose of the study and research problem investigated:

Walk and talk is an emergent therapeutic activity within counselling/psychotherapy. The activity of 'walk and talk' is pan-theoretical and can be utilised as the foundation for all therapeutic work, or as a periodic activity in conjunction with office based sessions. Research exploring the benefits and utility of walk and talk is in its infancy despite the growing number of therapists choosing to integrate this activity into their professional practice.

The main focus of the original study from which this paper has developed, was to explore general perceptions of walk and talk as a therapeutic activity. This paper will present qualitative data gained from short answer responses that sought to elicit perceptions of appealing and least appealing aspects of walk and talk therapy.

### Basic Design of Study:

Participation was sought from students aged 18 years and over from UK Universities/Colleges. The survey was administered on-line via the survey platform Qualtrics with a convenience sampling approach employed. Ethical permission was granted by a University research ethics committee. No sensitive information was sought and all responses were anonymous.

147 participants responded to the qualitative questions with 79% (n=117) female and 21% (n=29) male. 74% (n=109) of participants were aged between 18-35 years old, with the majority (n=80) aged between 18-25. The majority of participants indicated they were studying Psychology or Counselling related courses with both undergraduate and postgraduate levels represented.

### Major Findings:

Thematic analysis identified a mixed perception of walk and talk therapy. Taking therapy into an outdoor context and walking while talking was perceived to both support and hinder the therapeutic intent. Understanding potential clients' perceptions of therapeutic interventions, can serve to inform professional practice, leading to a client led and informed approach.