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Taking your mind for a walk : a qualitative investigation of walking and thinking among nine Norwegian academics / Mia Keinänen

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Abstract

Walking has long been associated with thinking. Anecdotal evidence from philosophers, writers, researchers, artists, business leaders and so forth testify to the powers of walking-for-thinking. This study explores walking-for-thinking among nine academics in Norway, four university professors, two research and development professionals, two researchers and a university president, who utilize walking-for-thinking as an explicit practice in their professional lives. Based on in-depth semi-structured qualitative interviews, the study identifies walking-for-thinking as a specific form of walking that has a steady rhythm and a specific individual speed that is experienced as most conducive to thinking. Further, the subjects experience walking-for-thinking as moving gestalt, an interplay between the person, environment and thinking where the rhythms of the body correlate with the rhythm of walking, affording feeling of enhanced memory and creativity. It is suggested that walking-for-thinking should be regarded as an alternative space for inquiry especially today when sitting has been identified as an independent health hazard and when sedentary workers are urged to

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look for alternative ways of working that include more movement. (HRK / Abstract übernommen)

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