



Explore & Walk

Connecting body, mind and soul

By using Movement, Mindfulness and
Outdoor Space





What is Explore and Walk and why it will help you:

Explore and Walk builds on wide ranging research and practical experiences which help live the benefits of using movement, outdoor space and mindfulness to support people to be as well as possible and to "do things better".

James Moore was first involved in agitating and co-creating a movement in 2012. This has led to close to 1,000 participants and a decade of successfully facilitating regular sessions to help individuals and teams to deal with issues of stress, burnout, workplace toxicity and to help people to find ways of being their best as much as possible.

The core programme is personal development. It is also been used to successfully to support teams to connect, grow and develop "how they do things". **Explore and Walk** is based on peer evaluated research from neuroscience and psychology by helping people to:

- ✓ pause, breathe and re-centre away from the day to day distractions of life
- ✓ challenge themselves and get comfortable with feeling uncomfortable
- ✓ improve their adaptability and resilience

The group environment is deliberately designed to be safe and supportive but with appropriate challenge. Whether participants are individuals or part of a pre-determined team, we focus on building relationships (knowing, liking and trusting each other [enough!]) so that participants can develop their peer coaching abilities.

Our **walking/movement** is fairly gentle and supportive, whilst the **stunning outdoor space** is a joy to spend time in and the opportunities to be **mindful and present** are constant. We focus on self care both individually and collectively. The time is likely to feel a bit uncomfortable, as we help participants to explore their negative capability.

The time spent together (normally we advise an immersive 3 days), takes participants through a physical and mindful journey so that they are better able to sustainably adapt themselves and help others to do the same. Our prompts with evidence and reflection on experiences help people explore and connect with their heads, hearts and souls. The emergent question focus on "so what will you do from here". Participants are supported to find ways to make any positive changes habitual. We have found every group to be different which has helped us evolve the programme.

In summary, Explore and Walk will help you:

- 😊 have better relationships and be more connected (self, others and situations/environment)
- 😊 Improve creativity
- 😊 Develop emotional intelligence and broader leadership
- 😊 Value diversity (and move away from constricting sameness)
- 😊 Be more well/well enough
- 😊 Enjoy and value learning
- 😊 Be re-energised in all parts of your life



How can you be supported to move, breathe, be more well and build your resilience?



We can help you in a variety of ways, depending on the outcomes you want. The heart of the approach is to help people and systems to focus more on relationships, inclusion and wellness. We do this through immersive and experiential learning. Depending on the needs of the individuals and/or groups/teams, further collaborative outcomes can be developed and built into each session.

For Organisations and Systems...

We support teams, groups, and any specific individuals (e.g. talent pools) to reflect, learn and grow through immersive opportunities.

- 1) Using an appropriate venue, we spend 2-4 fully immersive days together in a **residential** setting. We meet at the venue, and then spend as much as possible of the following 2-4 days walking (at a gentle pace) through the local environment. We explain the “why” of Explore and Walk and help to create ways to formalise these into individual and collective behaviours. We practice mindfulness to help and lightly introduce formal learning into the time (including the use of psychometric tools). Along with peer coaching and developing listening/noticing skills, this therapeutic environment provides a safe place for people to explore, self-challenge and make commitments. We provide “pre-work” and prompts to develop learning and build long-lasting relationships and bonds.
- 2) We use a **full day** together in an appropriate location to be in nature, walk and to be mindful. We both explore how the Explore and Walk mindset can help participants, experience these in practice, and then make commitments as to how whatever is appropriate will become lasting habits.
- 3) We can also provide **taster Part Day Workshops** which helps teams/groups and individuals understand the approach and start to consider and make a commitment to their individual and collective wellness through movement, nature and being more mindful.

For individual participants...

Whether you are part of an organisational/team event (as above) or have chosen to be part of a self-selected event, we will help you to feel safe, connect and challenge yourself. Our Alumni continuously highlight the importance of Explore and Walk in helping them to pause, breathe and reflect to give them the space to make changes to their lives. Many of these have proven to be very significant, powerful and always helping to achieve more positive outcomes. We are confident that the approach will help you.

We offer both **residential** immersive programmes and **full day** experiences for individuals who want to be part of the Explore and Walk experience. These will provide you with time and space to break your daily routines and give you the opportunity to reflect and commit to any appropriate changes.

To find out more and to help Explore and Walk become part of your work and life, contact james@mortawel.co.uk and find www.mortawel.co.uk



Why movement, mindfulness and outdoor space?

We use well researched and evaluated principles at the heart of the programme. Our experience over 9 years continues to remind us why these pillars are so important.

Movement is our natural state – we're not designed to be still for a long time! Even at night, we move. When we move, our brains produce a number of chemicals and proteins including endorphins and BDNF proteins (often referred to as “brain fertiliser”). So, moving helps us to feel and think better. John Medina describes exercise as Brain Rule #1 as it makes our cerebral cortex alert. Moving and increasing our heart rates increases our creativity, EQ and IQ and makes us feel good!

Additionally, moving helps us to see, hear and feel the world from a different place and other people's perspectives which is often vital to really connecting with other people. We know that genuinely valuing relationships and diversity is critical to our success as people and within workplaces: walking in someone else's shoes continues to be a hugely powerful experience in helping to recognise, understand and value differences.

Movement is also critical for when we feel anxious. When anxiety builds in our body, we create toxins. Staying still means that we are more likely to have physical and mental health issues (including a 49% increase from all causes of mortality, Wilmot et al, 2012). By exercising, these toxins disperse, help us to feel and be more well and creates resilience.

Mindfulness helps us to deliberately pay attention to something and create greater acceptance of our world “as it is”. Consistently research points to decreasing mental health across and the Covid pandemic has accelerated this decline. Mindfulness creates space to break the “vicious neural cycle” (Rita Carter, 2010) of our amygdala, prefrontal lobe, anterior cingulate and thalamus. By giving our minds a pause, we not only stop the damage, but we start to create new helpful and healthy neural pathways increasing our brain plasticity. This gives us immediate and long term health benefits including helping us to be more in control of our reactions.

Explore and walk helps participants to experience mindfulness and create sustainable habits through increased awareness. The effect is to increase individual and collective resources and resilience through being more present.

Outdoor space and nature helps us feel more alive. This is unsurprising as this is where we have evolved from! Being in nature helps us to be more energised with greater vitality. Research also consistently points to time in nature helping to build our physical and mental health and resilience. Even small doses of daily time outdoors helps us. Unsurprisingly, social prescribing is increasingly encouraging people to “be in nature”.

When we are outdoors, psychology research has shown that we are significantly more like to connect with and be more empathetic to ourselves, others and our situations/ environments. We are also likely to flourish, be more generous and kinder to everyone, including ourselves (Weinstein, 2010). Simply put, being outdoors helps us to care better!

What is the impact for participants and teams/organisations?



Participants consistently rated the Explore and Walk programmes as the best in depth and impactful learning that they had taken part in. The average score for “how likely are you to recommend this programme to others” was 9.8/10.

Why **organisations and teams** continue to use Explore and Walk:

“As part of our reorganisation so we could help our 16,000 people to be more effective, we worked with James to create a development programme for our new Divisions. The programme subtly embedded the **Explore and Walk** principles throughout all the sessions, which culminated in a highly successful two day residential programme. The relationships and leadership that have developed have helped us to more and better outcomes” – People/ OD Lead

“**Explore and Walk** inspired me to change how I do work and how I manage people by using outdoor nature for some team meetings. We had a brief check in (you haven’t arrived until you’ve spoken) and decided to use an action learning format to focus on one issue. We couldn’t believe how easy it was to solve a 25 year problem just by taking ourselves out of the confines of four walls. This was probably the most successful meeting I have attended in all my years as a manager. We bonded in a way that we had never done before; we work so much better now and we are achieving so much more by moving in our meetings” – Huw, Senior Manager

“I experienced **Explore and Walk** as a participant as part of our developing the Senior Management Team in our organisation. It was so powerful. It decluttered my mind. I got to know, like and trust my peers in ways that had never been possible before – we still reflect happily on the memories of being together. I felt so inspired that I brought the approach into my region. James helped to support my management team with sessions to understand, experience and use the approaches. It has been transformational for everyone.” – Rob, Regional Head of Operations

...and the impact on **individual participants**:

“**Explore and Walk** helped me to escape my hamster wheel of being continuously ‘on’. I learnt so much about myself, how using mindfulness gives me control and be present, by daily walking and connecting with the great outdoors. My mental wellbeing has never been better and I have never looked back. I have set up a fortnightly group at work, just half an hour, using mindfulness session to help myself and colleagues. This course and James literally changed my life” – Dawn

“**Explore and Walk** reconnected me with nature which helped me connect with myself. I noticed things I had never noticed before: the different colours of sand; the noise of the wind and the stillness out of it; the feel of fresh air in my lungs and face” - Kate

“Since **Explore and Walk**, I have embedded being kind to myself first, so that I lead my team to be kind to themselves. Every day, no matter the weather, I take my dogs and watch the sun rise and set, with the peace of the waves, the wind, the rain and the warmth, I enjoy nature at its best. Most days, I dip into the sea to set my equilibrium. It has prepared me to make the challenging and chaotic decisions that had to be taken during the pandemic. It has enabled me to breath during the terminal illness and death of my mother and it has helped me to carry on doing the best I can” – Chief Executive



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Get in touch
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