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**The Meaning of Movement in the Everyday Lives of Danish High-School
Students: A Phenomenological Study Exploring Existential Well-being as
'Dwelling-mobility'**

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Abstract

Health-promoting initiatives focusing on physical activity include advice on integrating active behaviour into everyday activities pointing to a tendency to combine a health agenda with other agendas. From a public-health perspective this might be a valuable strategy, but it calls for a conceptual awareness and exploration of the target groups’ perceptions of this broader concept of physical activity. Nested in a Danish intervention study aimed at increasing well-being among high-school students aged 16-17 through the promotion of movement, this study engages in a conceptual exploration of ‘movement in everyday lives’ related to well-being. Combining participant observation and photo-elicitation interviews, the study investigates different kinds of meaning experienced in relation to movement. Theoretically, the study is framed by existential phenomenology with a focus on corporeality, temporality and intersubjectivity. An existential theory of well-being is applied to a discussion of the relationship between bodily movement and well-being. The findings point to movement as a way for students to balance two existential modes within the dimensions of corporeality, temporality and intersubjectivity: one of activity and tenseness, and one of break and stillness. For the students, movement entails bodily experiences ranging from modes of self-forgetfulness to the body demanding attention in different ways; they experience movement as a break from everyday obligations, but also as a way of moving forward; and they experience movement as an occasion for being social and for withdrawing from the social worlds.

Keywords

Movement, well-being, high school students, health promotion, existential phenomenology

Introduction

This study explores Danish high-school students' experiences of bodily movement in everyday life in relation to well-being. The study intends to step aside from the classical division between health science and the humanities by pointing to the multidimensionality of the phenomenon – movement as something bodily, psychological and social (Eichberg 2014, 6). Resting on a phenomenological theoretical framework, the study suggests that meaning-making in relation to bodily movement is a multidimensional process related to our experience of existential well-being. By presenting a wide notion of bodily movement related to an existential concept of well-being, the study offers a new dimension of the complex picture that illustrates the relation between health, well-being and the active body (Nesti 2016). The study is not intended to contest the well-known part of this picture, which is physical activity (PA) to prevent disease, including the global health initiative Exercise is Medicine® (Lobelo, Stoutenberg, and Hutber 2014). However, supplementary perspectives are needed in order to advance the field of health promotion and active lifestyle (Nesti 2016; Cairney, McGannon, and Atkinson 2018).

The study springs from a Danish school-based intervention study, the Healthy High School Study (HHS), aimed at promoting well-being among high-school students through multiple strategies. In the HHS, well-being was conceptualised and articulated in relation to satisfaction with life¹ and the energy to manage everyday life². One of the strategies³ to promote well-being was to increase the students' overall movement in everyday

¹ In the HHS Study well-being was measured by the Cantril Ladder and the WHO-Five Well-being Index (WHO-5).

² In the needs assessment prior to the design of the HHS, students expressed 'energy for managing everyday life' as an important aspect of health and well-being.

³ Apart from a focus on increasing movement, the HHS aimed to promote well-being by reducing stress, improving sleep- and meal habits and promoting a stronger sense of community.

life, focusing on movement throughout the school day. By applying the term ‘movement’, the HHS was intended to appeal to a larger group of students, including those who do not usually engage in sports activities, and to encourage activities that fitted into the students’ existing everyday lives. Furthermore, the HHS was intended to emphasise the positive effects on well-being and peer relations of lighter movement activities and activities different from sports activities (Powell, Paluch, and Blair 2011; Smith 2003).

Similar to the focus on movement in the everyday life in the HHS, the potential to implement movement in everyday activities, e.g. in education and movement-appealing physical environments, has received growing attention (Larsen 2003; WHO 2015). Recent Danish school reforms prescribing a minimum of 45 minutes of daily movement during lessons in primary schools and vocational colleges ("Aftale mellem regeringen..." 2013; "Aftale om Bedre..." 2014) and cross-disciplinary research programmes, e.g. ‘Move for Well-being in Schools’ (Christiansen et al. 2018) and ‘Learning through Movement’ (Bugge et al. 2015) are examples of this. The choice to promote ‘movement’ instead of ‘physical activity’ or ‘exercise’ is not arbitrary, and different conceptualisations of movement impact the way we understand, measure and promote movement (Clark, Spence, and Holt 2011; Walseth, Aartun, and Engelsrud 2017). Sleaf and Wormald (2001) for example, found that young girls did not consider low-intensity activities such as walking or dancing to be physical activity. From a public-health perspective one needs to be aware of the certain connotations tied to concepts as physical activity and as Nesti points: ‘Greater care with terminology is therefore warranted, especially where behavior change in the public is the aim’ (2016). Focusing on movement in a wider sense might be a valuable strategy for public-health interventions and policies because this offers the opportunity to include other agendas besides the health-promoting agenda. However, the application of this humanistic lens on the active body within the health sciences

calls for conceptual exploration, including consideration of the societal context and discourses shaping our understandings of the concept of movement (Brown and Payne 2009). This is not only needed for conceptual enhancement within theoretical discussions and in the applied field of health promotion, but also because at the discourse level, these concepts entail meanings that influence individual bodily practices and experiences.

Several studies have investigated young people's participation in- and attitudes and views on physical activity, sport or physical education (PE) (e.g. Allender, Cowburn, and Foster 2006; Rees et al. 2006; Martins et al. 2015; Beni, Fletcher, and Ní Chróinín 2017; Pilgaard 2012; Thing and Ottesen 2013), but few empirical studies have explored movement as a concept extending over several spheres and types of activity. One example of the latter is a study by Clark et al. who explored 'how adolescent girls experience and make meaning of their ways of being active within their daily lives' (2011, 193). The authors found that dominant understandings of health and appearance were woven into the girls' understanding of physical activity. They also discovered that when talking about specific experiences of being active, different dimensions such as sensation, self-expression and creativity emerged (Clark, Spence, and Holt 2011). This distinction points to the importance of studying meaning at an experiential level and to explore a broader understanding of the concept of physical activity.

To enable a study of meaning structures, as in contrast to a focus on attitudes and views, and acknowledging the embodied dimension of meaning-making, phenomenology offers an appropriate strategy (Allen-Collinson 2016; Standal and Engelsrud 2013). The body of empirical studies applying a phenomenological framework to investigations of movement experiences illustrates the possibility of eliciting the invariant meaning structures and distinctive experiential qualities of specific activities, e.g. dance and parkour (Purser 2018;

Aggerholm and Højbjerg Larsen 2017; Ravn and Hansen 2013) and in specific settings, e.g. outdoor environments (Allen-Collinson and Leledaki 2015). Also, in relation to specific themes of embodiment including embodied learning (Svendler Nielsen 2012; Standal and Engelsrud 2013; Purser 2018), gender and empowerment (e.g. McDermott 2000; Liimakka 2011) phenomenology can reveal meaning structures embedded in the embodied existence of the participants. Overall, these studies illustrate experiences of embodiment related to the self (e.g. perception of identity), the surrounding physical world (e.g. the natural and spatial dimensions), the social world, and the embeddedness of these three dimensions.

As meaning structures in the sense of pre-reflective, tacit, embodied knowledge is the focus of phenomenological studies, this approach is especially suitable for exploring situations in which this kind of knowledge comes to the foreground and momentarily induces reflexivity (Crossley 2007). Situations of change, for example during learning and skill acquisition, changes in bodily functions or changes in physical surroundings may be examples of heightened bodily awareness and reflexivity, and numerous phenomenological studies exploring movement experiences and embodiment in relation to certain diseases or disabilities exist (e.g. Rasmussen, Nielsen, and Uhrenfeldt 2018; Aggerholm and Moltke Martiny 2017). To study routine everyday movement activities phenomenologically is a challenging task, and few studies embark on this endeavour. One example is a study by Rybråten et al. exploring the phenomenon of walking (2019). The authors describe the multifaceted and dynamic character of walking involving ‘relational connections between walker and landscape, where well-being constitutes a transverse effect’ (2019, 66). More specifically they note ‘Walking represents a form of exercise, a transport mode, a possibility for enjoying the landscape or other surroundings, a facilitation of contemplation and reflection, or an activity for being social’ (ibid.). Also, phenomenological studies of unstructured movement activities like

hiking and camping reveal a profound level of meaning (Bongaardt, Røseth, and Baklien 2016; Morrow, Rodriguez, and King 2017). Even though we may consider the settings in these two studies as changed physical surroundings in the sense that they are different from the places people go in everyday life, the movement activities may be characterised as everyday-like. The studies point to experiential qualities of among others tranquillity, relaxation, bodily relief and peacefulness, and freedom, getting away and distance from obligations (Morrow, Rodriguez, and King 2017; Bongaardt, Røseth, and Baklien 2016). Also, a social dimension relating to a sense of belonging, family cohesion and maintaining relationships was revealed (ibid). Despite the diverse foci of the cited studies, a crossing theme appears of the close relation between movement experiences and well-being.

What the three studies point to, is a higher level of meaning beyond (physiological) health, practicality or the ‘simple’ fact of enjoyment. Considering phenomenological studies of movement experiences in general, this level of meaning seems to be related to the embeddedness of several existential dimensions. This higher level of meaning ascribed to a broad and everyday notion of movement and the linkage to well-being is what we seek to further explore in this study, and to our knowledge this has not previously been studied empirically within a phenomenological framework (Nesti 2016; Eichberg 2014). Considering this knowledge gap and the starting point in the HHS, this study specifically intends to explore bodily movement as an everyday phenomenon in relation to an existential notion of well-being as experienced by Danish high-school students. Hereby, our point of departure is to allege to the idea of experienced values of the moving body, to acknowledge the deeply embodied character of movement, and to respond to an increased focus on promoting movement as a means to improved health and well-being. In this study, the concept of ‘movement in everyday lives’ encompasses organised sport and exercise activities,

including PE, non-organised activities such as play and dance at parties, and active transportation.

Theoretical framework

The phenomenological framework is applied as a philosophy – the ontological perspective of the study - and as method, in the sense that a certain attention to the phenomenon is applied both at a conceptual level and during the data collection (Allen-Collinson 2009; Standal and Engelsrud 2013; van Manen 2014). However, the analytical aim is of a less philosophical nature, since the intention is to bring an existing phenomenological concept, bodily movement in an existential sense, into a new setting, the health sciences, and to ground this transition on an empirical study (Ravn 2016). As part of this transition to explore bodily movement in relation to well-being, we apply the existential theory of well-being, ‘Dwelling-mobility’, by Todres and Galvin (2010). Before describing the Dwelling-mobility theory, we give a brief outline of the phenomenological concept of bodily movement.

Bodily movement as an analytical focus

To understand bodily movement from a phenomenological viewpoint it is necessary to consider the role of the lived body and the notion of meaning. From an existential phenomenological perspective, the body is the anchorage of existence in the world and the perspective from which we engage in the world (Gallagher and Zahavi 2012; Allen-Collinson 2016). The lived (subjective) body and the physical (object) body are two ways of experiencing the body, and to view the body as an object, there must be a viewer, a subject (Gallagher and Zahavi 2012). From this viewpoint the body plays an important epistemological role, as it is through *experiences* and *expressions* that we gain new knowledge.

Bodily experiences and expressions point to the concept of intentionality. From a phenomenological perspective, meaning is experienced through and expressed by intentionality, what we are directed towards, by always doing something and by pointing the body in a certain direction (Svenaesus 1999). In Svenaesus' presentation of Heidegger's concept of meaning, the term 'totality-of-relevance' expresses that everything is related by 'in-order-to' (she does X in order to do Y, in order to achieve Z) (Svenaesus 1999, 144-45). Meaning is, however, not just something we choose actively out of nothing or from of an infinite number of possibilities. Meaning is constituted *because* of our engagement with the world, and a horizon of possible meaning is projected therein (Gallagher and Zahavi 2012; Thøgersen 2012). Merleau-Ponty offers the metaphor of an 'intentional arc' projecting around us 'our past, our future, our human milieu, our physical situation, or rather, that ensures that we are situated within all of these relationships' (1945/2012, 137/70). Furthermore, experience of meaning is not always reflective, as our being-in-the-world is often characterised as a pre-reflective engagement, due to habitual everyday practices and attitudes and also due to our cultural and societal situatedness (Lindhardt 2014; Thøgersen 2012).

In the analysis, the notion of meaning expressed as 'in-order-to' was applied as 'movement-in-order-to' from two perspectives. One perspective focused on what the students expressed directly in the interviews – their reflections on the purpose and their motives for performing the activity. A third-person perspective focused on the first author's experience of the students' 'in-order-tos' based on the interviews and the observations. The different perspectives were thereby combined and considered in relation to a broader lifeworld 'movement-in-order-to'.

The embodied anchorage of existence and the notion of meaning expressed by embodied directedness points to bodily movement as a central existential condition. Gallagher and Zahavi describe the foundational nature of movement in the following way:

‘Our embodied movement participates in seeing, touching, hearing, etc. thereby informing our perceptual grasp of the world. (...) The way that objects appear in perception is not independent of the kinaesthetic dimension; they work together to produce the fulfilled meaning of the objects. (...) In short, the crucial point made by Husserl is not that we can perceive movement, but that our very perception presupposes movement’ (2012, 109-10).

The multidimensionality of movement and the entangled meaning experienced in relation to movement are emphasised. This notion of movement constitutes the analytical framework for the study.

Taking existential phenomenological philosophy in a more applied direction often involves a focus on the constituent dimensions of existence, the life-world existentials (van Manen 2014). Life-world existentials describe circumstances that are given to all of us and under which we experience the world. Employing life-world existentials, one emphasises the experiential qualities, for example the *experience* of time in contrast to measurable clock time. During the analytical process, three life-world existentials in particular resonated in the empirical material and appeared to be central to understanding the students’ experiences of movement in relation to well-being, namely *corporeality* (lived body), *temporality* (lived time) and *relationality/intersubjectivity* (lived relations)⁴ (van Manen 2014). In the section

⁴ van Manen also describes the existentials of spatiality (lived space) and materiality (lived things) as dimensions relevant to exploring lived experience. The spatial and material dimensions of the students’ movement experiences also appeared in the empirical material, but not as clearly as the three existentials mentioned above and were therefore excluded from the analysis.

presenting the findings, movement as an everyday phenomenon is unfolded within these three existentials.

Existential well-being as Dwelling-mobility

The existential theory of well-being focusing on ‘Dwelling-mobility’ points to existential well-being as a being-in-the-world and a felt sense of this experience characterised by a unity of two experiential modes: ‘In dwelling-mobility, there is an integration of peace and possibility or stillness and movement’ (Galvin and Todres 2011, 2). The perspective of two separate, yet intertwining and dependent experiential modes already appeared in the initial analytical phase. The Dwelling-mobility theory was therefore considered relevant in relation to the overall theme and theoretical framework, and as a model resonating the descriptions of the students. Todres and Galvin (2011) argue that existential well-being is experienced when a person simultaneously experiences groundedness (dwelling) and movement (mobility), and they apply life-world existentials (spatiality, temporality, intersubjectivity, mood, identity and embodiment) to point to the variations in the experience of well-being (2011). An important aspect of the Dwelling-mobility theory is that the different kinds of well-being experiences relating to the two dimensions, dwelling and mobility, can be experienced in both literal and metaphorical ways (Galvin and Todres 2011). It is, for example, possible to distinguish between movement in a spatial dimension in a literal sense (experiencing movement in an actual space) and movement in a spatial dimension in a metaphorical sense (imagining movement in a mental space different from the present physical space). This aspect is important in order to understand the multiple simultaneous qualities of the students’ bodily movement experiences.

Methodology

‘Movement in everyday life’ as empirical focus

The empirical focus was bodies in movement, and bodies moving in and out of movement, including bodies in stillness, with openness towards the multidimensionality of the phenomenon of movement. Exploring the students’ bodily movement during different situations such as classes, breaks, transportation and leisure time, ‘movement in everyday life’ appeared as activities normally labelled as ‘sport’ (e.g. soccer), ‘exercise’ (e.g. workout in a fitness centre), ‘active transport’ (e.g. biking), ‘movement integrated in education’ (‘brain breaks’⁵) and ‘Physical Education’. Additionally, movement activities such as walking around, climbing stairs, walking the dog, working as a waiter, dancing at parties etc. also occurred.

In the analytical process these different activities were conceptualised as ‘movement in everyday life’ in order to investigate movement as a broad phenomenon which, at an experiential level, gives rise to similar qualities of experience. For example, the experience of movement as a break was mentioned by several of the students, but this experience was related to different movement activities. Different empirical examples of how the students move their bodies in everyday life are provided in the findings section.

The phenomenological aim of creating rich descriptions of lived experiences calls for methods which can help generate data that is: ‘..as closely related to the way these experiences unfold and take shape in contextualized and “truly lived” situations’ (Ravn 2016, 208). A combination of participant observation at two high schools and subsequent photo-

⁵ The term ‘brain break’ was used in the HHS and covers movement activities integrated in lessons both as a break from teaching and as support for the dialectical/academic aim.

elicitation interviews with ten students enabled the first author to get close to the students' experiences and perceptions of 'movement in everyday life'. The participant observation enabled a view of the students' movements during the school day without their interpretations of the concept. The photo-elicitation interviews gave the students an opportunity to illustrate and interpret the role of movement in their leisure time. Based on the photos, it was possible to explore the full everyday life of each student, to ask them what was missing from the photos, or to 'go behind' the concept and ask about situations of no-movement (Harper 2002; Azzarito and Sterling 2010). As the photos illustrated specific situations, to which the students had paid particular attention, the photo-elicitation strategy proved valuable to the aim of capturing a wide, and for some students, rather abstract phenomenon. The photos were only used as an interview tool not as data. The participant observation served as a crucial supplement to the challenging task of achieving richly embodied first-person descriptions of movement.

Data collection and participants

The high schools participating in this study are part of the Danish education programme named upper secondary school leaving examination, a three-year academically-oriented programme qualifying for higher education. On average 52 per cent of young people in Denmark complete this programme (the Danish Ministry of Children Education and Equality 2015). All education in Denmark is financed by taxes, and private schools are subsidised by the state (the Danish Ministry of Children and Education 2019)⁶.

The participant observation was conducted at two of the 30 high schools included in the HHS, both located in the capital area of Copenhagen. The two schools were

⁶ For further information on the Danish upper secondary education system, see (Bonnesen et al. *Submitted.*).

selected as they differed in terms of size, location within the metropolitan area of Copenhagen and private/public status. At each high school, one class of first-year students (aged 16-17) was followed throughout the school day (from 8 am to 3.30 pm). Selection of the two classes took place in collaboration with the school principals based on their assessment of willingness to participate in the respective teacher teams. The two classes did not represent a specific profile regarding sports or academic level, and the student composition within the classes varied in relation to gender, ethnicity, perceived academic level, and perceived participation in sport. The students' description of their place of residence and family background reflected a variation in socioeconomic background as well. The participant observation lasted four to five weeks at each high school and was conducted in October-November 2016 and January 2017. The first author wrote descriptive and reflective notes both while in the field and outside the field (Patton 2002).

A couple of months after the participant observation was conducted the students from the two classes were invited to participate in a photo-elicitation interview. During a school lesson the first author instructed the students to think of movement in everyday life in a wide sense and she gave examples from her own everyday life. Ten students, seven girls and three boys, accepted the invitation and sent the first author photos of 'Movement in my everyday life' for one week, followed by a face-to-face interview exploring the photos. A combination of interview approaches was applied (Patton 2002). At the beginning, an unstructured approach was applied, allowing the students to describe the situations depicted on their photos. Subsequently, a semi-structured approach was applied to ensure that certain settings of movement such as PE were covered (Patton 2002). Inspired by a phenomenological approach, the first author sought to get the students to describe specific situations and experiences, asking such questions as 'Can you describe the situation depicted

in the photo?’ and ‘What did you experience when you... ?’ (van Manen 2014). The interviews were conducted at the high schools after school hours and lasted on average 50 minutes. The ten students’ participation in sport ranged from elite sports to ‘I don’t exercise’. Furthermore, different types of sport were represented, including self-organised sport (running), workout at fitness centres and club-based sports such as taekwondo, karate, football and basketball.

The students participating in the interviews were informed that they could withdraw their consent at any time. To make the material anonymous, the participants’ names and names of geographical places were changed. The first author transcribed the interviews verbatim. During both the data collection and analytical phases, findings-in-process were discussed continuously in the group of authors, as well as among other colleagues.

Analytical strategy

The analytical process was a hermeneutical dialogue between the empirical material focusing on both movement and the students’ broader life situations, and the existential phenomenological framework and included five overlapping steps (van Manen 2014). Firstly, the material was explored by an open question *What is at stake for the students?* Secondly, the material was approached to explore and compare the students’ and the first author’s view of ‘movement in everyday life’. In the third step the material was examined in detail according to the notion of ‘in-order-to’ (Svenaesus 1999, 144). All the ‘movement-in-order-to’ appearing were listed and grouped into 14 themes emerging from the empirical material (e.g. the social, the body, a break and stress). In the fourth step, the 14 themes were adopted in a reflection guided by the three life-world existentials of corporeality, temporality and relationality (van Manen 2014). Finally, in the fifth step, the meaning structures of ‘movement in everyday life’ described within the three existential themes were related to the

theory of 'Dwelling-mobility' in order to analyse and discuss the relation of bodily movement to existential well-being (Todres and Galvin 2010).

Findings

To contextualise the findings on students' specific movement experiences in relation to a broader life-world perspective and current cultural and societal contexts, we will initiate the presentation of findings with an introductory glimpse into the overall life situations and concerns of the students.

Introduction to the context and lives of Danish high-school students

The immediate impression of *pressure* and *performance* as recurring themes of students' everyday lives appeared from the beginning of the participant observation. The students face pressure in relation to planning and carrying out the several tasks and demands of everyday life, pressure in relation to participating and performing in social life, and pressure related to academic achievement and expectations for the future. This immediate impression is in line with broader tendencies of Western youth culture, for example young peoples' struggle for juggling school demands and social relations, and an increased norm of perfectionism (Curran and Hill 2019; Lillefjord et al. 2017). However, contrasting themes of *enjoyment*, *disconnection* and *relaxation* also appeared in this study.

All students had numerous tasks to carry out in their everyday lives. Apart from a busy school schedule including weekly assignments and daily homework, they were engaged in part-time jobs, volunteer jobs, duties at home, sports activities, driving lessons, spending time with friends and family, and going to parties. Having time for and managing the many activities was clearly a demanding task for many students, and there was considerable variation in how they experienced time. This is in line with another Danish study

(Thing, Nielsen, and Ottesen 2015) which illustrates how time appears to be an issue of great importance to the students.

Pressure related to participating and performing socially was associated with the use of social media in particular. During the field work the students' constant awareness of social media was evident, and the interviews revealed how this could be experienced as a pressure, since some of the students expressed a need to be alone and disconnect from the social world. The students also spent a lot of time with friends and family. Similar to the pressure related to the social media and in line with another Danish study, some of the students described these social engagements as obligations (Bruselius-Jensen and Sørensen 2017).

Several initiatives to get more young people into secondary education and prevent them from dropping out, have been launched in Denmark throughout the last decade (Katznelson 2017). This message concerning the increasing importance of education was also evident from the priorities expressed by the students. All participating students emphasised and prioritised academic performance. In the Danish upper secondary educational system the students are required to opt for specific subjects and study programmes at the beginning of and throughout their high-school career (the Danish Ministry of Education 2017). These decisions determine which higher education studies students can be admitted into after high school. The students felt pressured by the dilemma of having to make certain choices early in life without knowing which higher education studies they wished to apply for, and with the fear of selecting a wrong path.

In contrast to the overall theme of pressure and performance, issues related to enjoyment, disconnection and relaxation also appeared. The students were aware of their need

for sleep and rest. Watching television or other ‘screen activity’ was a regular element of the everyday schedule of many students. Also, a momentary disconnection from class by playing computer games or surfing the Internet was observed for most of the students. Related to the theme of enjoyment, parties and drinking alcohol appeared to be of great importance for the students.

An initial overall observation of contrasting life-world themes thus appeared. The following section on the main findings explores the students’ experience of bodily movement in relation to the life-world existentials of corporeality, temporality and intersubjectivity. A central aspect of the analysis is the interrelation of the life-world existentials. With empirical examples, the three following sections serve to illustrate the point of multifaceted meaning-making related to bodily movement.

Movement as a way of experiencing different modes of the lived body

The exploration of movement as a corporeal experience revealed two experiential modes of the lived body in particular: 1) *The body experienced as unnoticed*, a pre-reflective state of body consciousness appeared primarily during observations; and 2) *The body demanding attention*, both as a physical object and as bodily sensation appeared, primarily through the students’ descriptions in the interviews.

The body as unnoticed

For most people, day-to-day movement activities, such as doing the laundry, are performed without paying any special attention to the body and the activity as movement. Our attention is focused on the goal we are heading towards. Throughout the school day the first author observed how the students walked between classrooms, danced and played around during breaks or used the break to walk to the supermarket to buy lunch, etc. For some of the

students, a bike ride to and from school was another example of the moving body in a mode of inattention, or in the words of van Manen ‘the body as an aspect of the world’, which is that our main occupation is in and with the world and the activities we are engaged in (2014, 327). It was difficult for the students to reflect on the experiential nature of a bike ride. This might be the case exactly because the body and bodily sensations do not demand attention during unchallenging routine activities where the purpose is part of the person’s engagement in the world.

Another aspect within this mode of bodily inattention is the experience of being present in the moment forgetting time and space:

Oscar: I run all the way along the boardwalk at the harborside, and I have music in my ears, and then there is just a long straight stretch of the track You get into what you are doing, and then it’s just to get going. The world isn’t really there... there are a lot of tourists around and there are noisy ferries, but.... the music is there and then there isn’t really much else...

Oscar experiences his body with what van Manen calls an ‘unaware awareness’ (2014, 328). His active body is fully engaged in the world, but his attention is not directed towards a specific goal or the very act of running. When Oscar describes how ‘You get into what you are doing’ and ‘The world isn’t really there’ he indicates a mode of self-forgetfulness or flow that, despite the inattention to the body, becomes a very sensuous mode whereby he feels the movement, the space and the music very strongly.

In contrast to the experience of the body in the inattentive mode, there is the experience of the body demanding attention, both in a felt sense and when the body catches our attention as a physical object.

The body demanding attention

Many of the students emphasised the health benefits of movement. In these descriptions, notions of the body as an object appeared and they spoke about the body as some-‘thing’ that needed to be utilised and activated: ‘utilising the body in a good way’, ‘get the muscles started’, and wordings like ‘to get in good shape’, ‘to prevent injuries’ and ‘to build up muscles’ commonly appeared.

A similar aspect of the experience of the observed body is what van Manen refers to as ‘The body of self as self-observed’ (2014, 332). Here, he describes how ‘...one’s own body becomes an object for one’s own scrutiny’ and also how the bodies of others can become objects of one’s scrutiny (ibid). Some of the girls in the study were very aware of their physical appearance. They linked perceived improvements in their physical appearance to movement activities and sport. The duality of the experiential modes of the lived body is illustrated by the girls’ expression of how their experience of their own physical appearance is related to how they feel ‘inside’ about themselves:

Sara: In principle, I really don’t care if people look at me and then they can see that I have been working out and losing weight. I don’t care what other people think, as long as I like how I look myself. Personally, I really don’t care about how much I weigh.... as long as I feel it’s not all fat.

The quote indicates some ambiguity. Sara expresses that she does not care about how other people judge her appearance. Yet by using words like ‘in principle’ and ‘personally’ she expresses some reservations, signalling her preoccupation with her physical appearance and her adoption of a beauty ideal, with which she is not entirely comfortable. The degree of her preoccupation shows that her ‘inside’ feelings about herself are highly related to her physical appearance; her body as an object viewed from the outside.

This duality of the experienced body is further illustrated by the following examples focusing on the body as sensed in a manner differently from the experience of the body as an object. The body demanding attention through sensed experience appeared through the students' descriptions of the experience of both well-being and pleasure in relation to, and of unsatisfying experiences of the inactive body calling for movement.

Bodily movement made the students experience a 'nice', 'fresh', 'satisfying' sensation in the body, it 'eases restlessness and stiffness' and 'prevented a feeling of heaviness in the body'. These expressions relate to the experiences of biking to school, walking the dog, hanging out with friends after school, and dancing foolishly around during a break, and they reflect experiences of well-being, relief and change. In contrast to positive experiences sensed through the body during movement, there is the experience of discomfort and restlessness related to long periods without bodily movement. For many of the students the experience of restlessness occurred during school lessons or at home, where the students would spend several hours watching television or on other screen activities:

Martin: Yes, I feel it... I feel seriously lazy... like your shoulders hanging downward and [you're] a bit unfocused and bumpy in the head.... not having the head in the right place.... so yes, then you can feel that you haven't been active.

The interesting part of the quote from Martin is his felt sense of the head in relation to inactivity – an experience described by many of the students. Movement activities could ease the brain from over-stimulation and give the head a break, but also prepare the brain for further stimulation and learning by increasing students' energy and concentration. Sasha expresses it in a similar way:

Sasha: *But it's like you kind of air out your head, and de-stress. I use it a lot if I have many thoughts [running through my mind] or if I feel under pressure...*

The students pay special attention to the mind and describe what may seem a schism between the experience of the body and of the mind. However, the fact that the descriptions are about the felt sense of the head, one part of the body (and bearing in mind the duality of the experiential modes of the objective body and the sensed body), points to a complexity of bodily experience that exceeds the dualistic perspective of a schism between body and mind.

Movement as a way of balancing different temporalities

This part of the analysis focuses on how movement is experienced in a temporal sense. On the one hand it reveals experiences of presence, break and de-stressing. On the other hand, it shows experiences of accomplishment, energy and orientation towards the future.

Movement as a way to take a break, be present and destress

The bodily experience of 'unaware awareness' mentioned above is also a temporal experience in the sense of soon losing track of time, on entering the flow state and being present. During a PE class the first author observed two girls getting caught up in a badminton game. Before the class, the girls stated that they were not going to engage in the game and get sweaty. Nevertheless, they fully engaged in the game throughout the entire class, running around on the court, laughing and sweating, and with flushed faces. From a third-person perspective, we do not know whether the girls actually experienced a loss of their sense of time. Yet the fact that they forgot their initial intentions for the class, and got caught up in the game, reveals a certain kind of presence.

Contrary to the blurred experience of losing one's sense of time is the students' explicit experience of movement as a break. The term 'break' was frequently used by the

students, yet it referred to different situations: '(Fitness training as) *a break from the ordinary everyday life..*', '(PE as) *this time where I can really relax and let go of analyses and stuff...*', and '(Active breaks during classes) *Nice to have a break from sitting down...*'. Oscar described how, for him, biking and running served as breaks between long periods of sitting down, both during school hours and hours spent on homework at home.

These extracts reflect movement as an activity that allows the students to turn their attention away from 'ordinary doings' and duties such as schoolwork and homework. The students generally emphasised the importance of relaxing and taking a break from demanding everyday life, as described at the beginning of this section. However, for many of them, spending a larger amount of time on the couch was followed by unpleasant feelings:

Sasha: I easily get tired of myself when I'm just lying down at home.... becoming a couch potato, I don't like that... I just think yuck! Then I feel kind of all heavy... in the body.

The word 'break' contains meanings of temporarily stepping aside from an activity, making space for relaxation and calmness. The students could relate to this experientially and described how movement activities could result in a calm and de-stressing feeling, even though it might only be temporary:

Amina: It (taekwondo practice) actually de-stresses me... (...) well, I get new thoughts and I'm having fun while I'm there, but the moment I'm back home, then I think, I have to do that assignment and I also have to do.... all kinds of things.

Just as in the case of the section on corporeality, we see that the students emphasise the felt sense of an over-stimulated, thought-heavy mind calling for a break. In these situations,

bodily movement might change the experiential focus giving space for sensing the rest of the body.

In contrast to these experiences of attempting to slow down, step aside and maybe even stop time, are the students' efforts to keep up with time, maintain progress and look to the future.

Movement as accomplishment, energy and turning towards the future

Many of the students experienced that involvement in movement activities in a wide sense gave them a sense of accomplishing something:

Sasha: One day I said to my mum "Don't you know the feeling of having achieved a lot of things during a day, and then you really feel all good about yourself and what you've achieved?" That day I had done a lot of things – [I had] been to school and out for a run and walking with my dog and tidying up my room and tidying up in the living room and changing bedclothes... I just feel very relieved afterwards, because.... You have actually done something with your day instead of just staying at home watching a screen or reading a book and doing homework.

As the quote shows, the satisfied feeling is related to accomplishment whereby the body is actively engaged, in contrast to activities where the body is sedentary. Several of the students described an experience of satisfaction and relief related to fulfilling goals involving active engagement of the body. This might be related to the students' experience of a guilty conscience after relaxing without activating the body. In relation to this, some of the students spoke about being productive and not wasting time, 'a feeling of spending your day in a good

way'. The idea that time must be 'used' well indicates that students' experience time as a limited resource.

Many of the students experienced movement as a valuable way of generating energy for both the near future and the continued process of handling a busy and demanding day-to-day schedule. For example, some of them expressed how they would take a break and go for a walk or run when they experienced a lack of energy while doing their homework, or when they got stuck with an assignment, and described how movement in general provided them with new energy to focus on 'brain work':

Oscar: When I have been out for a run, I definitely feel like I've gained a little more energy and then it's easier to sit and concentrate on the homework for tomorrow...

Sanne: It (the workout) somehow gives me surplus energy for doing the rest..., because my brain... When I have this long-lasting routine of working out, then I have this surplus energy to focus on something different afterwards...

The quotes indicate that students use movement as a way to enhance academic productivity. Again, we see an indication of the experienced schism between body and mind. The idea of generating energy to manage everyday life indicates a focus on the forthcoming, pointing to movement as an investment in future health. The students' descriptions of shifting constantly between breaks and activity for both the mind and the body point to interrelations of the existentials of corporeality and temporality – that the body is part of the orientation in time.

Movement as a way of balancing intersubjectivity

This section explores the relational aspects of movement. We show that movement offers the students an occasion for social activity, but also an opportunity to withdraw from the multiple social worlds of which they are part.

Movement to create opportunities for social engagement

Many of the students described how they participated in certain movement activities in order to spend time with other people. For example, several students from one of the high schools often went to a soccer field close to the high school after school hours. Here, they would 'hang out' for a couple of hours playing soccer or just sitting or walking around talking to each other. Oliver explained how that place, the soccer field, and the purpose of playing soccer, gathered his class mates, who would otherwise just split up and go home.

In many situations the students were highly aware and reflective of the social purpose of the movement activities in which they were engaged. In other situations, being together or 'hanging out' created an occasion for spontaneous movement activities. In these situations, movement was not the initial purpose of being together, but more a non-organised activity, such as playing around or a little banter randomly taking place, for example during lunch breaks.

The students described the social dimension of movement as a sense of belonging to a team or group of friends and strengthened group cohesion. This cohesion included the experience of getting closer to people, developing relationships and discovering new dimensions of classmates. Oscar refers to a sport event at the high-school:

Oscar: And then recently there was this sports day at school, where you could play soccer, and everybody thought it was cool, and the girls were also

participating and cheering, and the boys were also playing... And it creates, I think, a lot more cohesion – that you can move around together instead of sitting down analysing poems together

In line with this, Oliver gives an example of getting to know new dimensions of his classmates when moving outside the classroom to do something other than academic work:

Oliver: When we do something different, that I find really cool... One example was William – we were on a trip to (a museum) and there was this exhibition on architecture, and it was just spot on for him.... The teachers praised him (William) a lot for drawing so beautifully... you didn't really expect it of him, but it was just so cool for him.... Whether it's sport or another theme, just doing something different together, where you get to see new dimensions of people....

As it has come forth in the analysis movement can be a relational experience in numerous ways. However, the need to be alone was also expressed by some of the students, and interestingly, for these students movement could fulfil that need.

Movement as an opportunity to withdraw from social worlds

For some of the students, going for a walk or going to the fitness centre were good opportunities to be alone and withdraw from the social world:

Frida: I like to be alone, not because I feel lonely, but I like to be alone once in a while, and in these situations (on her walks to the train station) it's nice when you walk, then you're just on your own... it's like I'm not alone, well yes, I'm alone physically and also in my thoughts...

Martin, who is a former elite basketball player, describes how he enjoys meditation because it establishes calmness, peace and allows him a moment alone:

Martin: Silence... peace.... mindfulness, a moment where nothing really happens. When I was practising basketball, I had this time just before the practice where I would do some stretching with music in my ears, and just relaxing... closing my eyes and there was nobody around me... it was perfect....

The social life taking place on social media was very apparent during the participant observation, and it was mentioned by some of the students. Related to the experience of feeling obliged to attend to multiple social worlds at all hours of the day and night is the students' active decision to disconnect momentarily from this, including the social media.

Sanne described several situations where she puts her phone away because she needs a break:

Sanne: I feel that my head becomes kind of all filled up and I don't have the same energy, and then I end up doing none of the things I've planned, because I don't have the energy for meeting up with friends and things... (...) I feel I'm able to disconnect. Usually it helps to turn off the phone, so that everything on Facebook and stuff doesn't disturb me, so that I can really disconnect, and just have this time for myself where I only have to think about myself (...) ... Because the social media do something with your brain, because you always have to be online, always answer immediately when somebody writes you, and sometimes it's a little too much for me. For example, if I'm going to the supermarket with my dad - a chance to take a little walk, I might leave the phone at home, because... sometimes I really don't want to drag it with me... [I don't want] to be forced to reply immediately when somebody writes me

The quote illustrates that Sanne's social relations are important to her, but to be able to engage in these she needs to prioritise her time and energy. Leaving her phone at home while joining her father on the walk to the supermarket relieves her of the burden of dragging along her phone and thereby the obligation to be attentive to the social world unfolding on social media.

The descriptions by Frida, Martin and Sanne indicate the potential of movement as an opportunity to withdraw from or limit the social worlds of which they are part. This is probably not a matter of disconnecting from the social world completely, but of balancing the energy and attention devoted to the multiple social worlds.

Discussion: Movement in everyday life in relation to existential well-being

Through the students' accounts of the lived experience of movement, this analysis shows how meaning experienced in relation to bodily movement is multifaceted, situated and related to the overall life circumstances of the students. From an existential phenomenological perspective, the constituents of experience, corporeality, temporality and intersubjectivity, and the dialectics within the constituents of experience point to bodily movement as a way for the students to balance different existential modes. The embodied dimensions of the students' movement experiences relate to experience of both 'unaware awareness' and flow, and the body demanding attention in its complexity of being simultaneously a subject and an object during experiences of both relief and vitality, and restlessness and heaviness. The temporal dimensions relate to feelings of accomplishment and orientation towards the future, but also experiences of breaks and stepping aside from the forward orientation. The social dimensions point to movement as a valuable occasion for being together with friends and developing relationships, but also as an opportunity to withdraw from a social life that can be a pressure.

Even though the focus of this study is movement in everyday life in relation to well-being, the findings resonate with the findings of studies investigating barriers and facilitators experienced by young people in relation to physical activity and sport. For example, reviews find, among other factors, enjoyment, a sense of achievement, reduced stress and social benefits as facilitators for young people to be physically active (Rees et al. 2006; Allender, Cowburn, and Foster 2006). The existential framework applied in this study, however, enables a view of the relations between these experienced benefits and disadvantages, such as the dialectical relation between the experience of achievement and reduced stress. Furthermore, the theoretical framework can add nuance to some of the previous findings, such as the barrier of a lack of time, since a focus on lived time differs significantly from a focus on measurable time.

Below, the main findings are brought into dialogue with the ‘Dwelling-mobility theory’ (Todres and Galvin 2010). This dialogue offers an enhanced understanding of the complex experiential relations between movement and well-being by gathering the findings related to the three constituents of experience in the picture of Dwelling-mobility. This picture of two separate, yet intertwining, modes of being can also illustrate situations where the well-being potential in bodily movement might be compromised.

Movement, corporeality and ‘Dwelling-mobility’

Todres and Galvin describe existential well-being within the corporeal dimension as being extended between a ‘sense of comfort’ (dwelling) and a ‘sense of vitality’ (mobility) (2010, 6). The high-school students expressed a need for relaxation, but they also experienced a bodily need for movement and higher energy levels resulting from movement activities. Accordingly, the students’ accounts point to the possibility of movement as a path to embodied well-being in the balancing act between comfort (dwelling) and vitality (mobility).

The balancing act concerns not just a constant change between conscious experiences of bodily comfort and vitality, but also a concurrency in different experiential modes, and also a pre-reflective mode: ‘The comfortable body is simply there in its reliable givenness’ (2011, 11). Todres and Galvin label this complex experience of embodied Dwelling-mobility ‘grounded vibrancy’: ‘In grounded vibrancy, a person’s bodily existence is felt as an intertwining of gentle energized flow, unified with a bodily sense of feeling deeply at home and settled’ (2011, 11). The previous analysis with the example of Oscar’s experience during a run described a mode of ‘unaware awareness’ (comfort), but at the same time a very sensuous mode, sensing the movement (vitality), might be an example of ‘grounded vibrancy’. However, when the students emphasise the healthy physical (object) body – the body as some ‘thing’ that needs to be activated, the well-being potential related to movement might be reduced, because the perception of the body does not capture the deeper and more complex nature of the embodied existence. The moving body becomes the means to the ends of physical fitness, appearance and academic performance.

Movement, temporality and ‘Dwelling-mobility’

The students’ descriptions of movement as enabling both presence and a break, and forward orientation coincide with Todres and Galvin’s illustration of temporal well-being as the experience of ‘being grounded in the present moment’ (dwelling) and ‘temporal flow and forward movement’ (mobility) (2010, 5). Bodily movement in everyday life might, therefore, contain the potential to balance the two temporal modes.

However, Galvin and Todres further note that the forward movement should take place in ways that are valued or wanted (Galvin and Todres 2011, 4). Based on the above analysis it might be questioned whether the students’ forward orientation is entirely wanted. The students often spoke of obligations, and not wasting time was another concern for many

of them. With reference to Merleau-Ponty, each of the students create meaning within their own 'intentional arc' (1945/2012, 137/70). They must thus navigate and balance several intentions, including societal and cultural norms. The students move because they feel they are expected to live a healthy and productive life, but they also move to get a break from these obligations and as a reaction to their own embodied sense. Interestingly, bodily movement might therefore offer them an opportunity to step aside from the unwanted obligations, at least temporarily. In summary, movement as a balancing act contains a potential for well-being within a temporal dimension.

Movement, intersubjectivity and 'Dwelling-mobility'

Todres and Galvin describe the intersubjective dimension of Dwelling-mobility as stretched out between 'a sense of kinship and belonging' and 'a sense of mysterious interpersonal attraction' (2010, 5-6). This notion resonates with the students' descriptions of the relational aspects of movement. Situations involving movement enable feelings of belonging to a group and, at the same time, constitute an opportunity to get to know people even better. Through movement, the students may seek both dimensions of intersubjective well-being.

For some students, the balance of the intersubjective dimension in their life-worlds might tip over at times, making the multiple social worlds too intense, at the expense of the quality of the relational experience – the dwelling dimension. The 'mysterious interpersonal attraction' available at all hours on social media might become too attractive and instil a feeling of not wanting to miss out on anything in the digital social life. According to some of the students, in these cases movement activities can offer a valuable way back into the intersubjective dwelling. Movement activities together with others can create the experience of getting closer to people, focusing attention on one sociality, while movement as an occasion for being alone may entail the experience of the presence of oneself and one's

body. In other words, movement creates occasions for experiencing and re-establishing intersubjective well-being.

From a well-being perspective, the multifaceted and situated meaning processes related to bodily movement, as illustrated above, highlight the need for a critical look at the dominating perspectives of health, physical activity and the body, including the global Exercise is Medicine® initiative and the ideology of healthism (Crawford 1980; Lobelo, Stoutenberg, and Hutber 2014). Promoting physical activity and movement in a discourse resting solely on a system of extrinsic values such as (bio-medical) health, wealth and power, trumps important intrinsic values, such as personal meaning, joy and relief (Cairney, McGannon, and Atkinson 2018; Kretchmar 2000; Nesti 2016). As this study suggests, it may as well be these kinds of experienced value that connect movement as an everyday phenomenon with deeper levels of well-being. For example, the simple act of biking home from school carries experiences of break and relief. By adhering to a discourse of preventing illness and promoting physical health, focusing on movement as a purely physical phenomenon instead of appealing to lived experiences of meaningful movement, we might miss the young audience. Likewise, shrouded in the contemporary focus on productivity and (academic) performance, the satisfaction of bodily movement lies in the ‘ticking off’ of a daily task. Ignoring the complexity of meaning and underrating the experienced values involves a risk of reinforcing undesirable health discourses that shape the students’ interpretations of their movement experiences and ultimately affect their well-being in an embodied way (Lupton 1995).

Conclusion and final remarks

Looking across the three constituents of experience of corporeality, temporality and intersubjectivity and applying Dwelling-mobility as a notion of well-being, for the students

we may consider bodily movement in everyday life as containing the potential to balance two existential modes: a mode of mobility, activity and tenseness and a mode of dwelling, break and stillness. For the students, movement entails bodily experiences ranging from modes of self-forgetfulness to the body demanding attention in different ways; they experience movement as a break from everyday obligations, but also as a way of moving forward; and they experience movement as an occasion for being social and for withdrawing from the social world.

The findings must be considered in the light of two challenging areas in particular that are related to the phenomenological exploration of a topic with such broad scope as the meaning of movement in everyday life in relation to well-being. Firstly, the students volunteering for the photo-elicitation interviews might have had a special interest in the topic. Also, considering the time pressure experienced by many young people, the participants probably experienced having excess time and energy for yet another ‘task’. Hence, the group possibly differs considerably from the group experiencing greater challenges in relation to health, movement, and managing everyday life in general. To facilitate the phenomenological approach it was, however, important to include students who were willing to tell their stories and able to richly describe their lived experiences of movement (van Manen 2014). Advantageously, the ten students represented a heterogeneous group of high-school students regarding participation- and interest in sport, allowing a more diverse set of movement experiences to appear. For many of them, however, sport and exercise accounted for a large part of their ‘movement in everyday life’ and they tended to conceptualise movement as sport and exercise. Secondly, rich and ‘pure’ experiential descriptions are not easy to deliver, and certainly not for a group of young people struggling to ‘perform’ a good interview. The challenge may have been even more difficult due to the

unclear definition of the concept. The photo-elicitation strategy proved to be a valuable method to open up the interviews and explore situations to which the students had paid special attention to different degrees. These interviews helped the students describe experiences and aspects they had not thought of or articulated before. This might therefore not be a matter of imposing pre-defined meaning, but a case of the interview dialogue giving rise to new meaning and understandings (Brinkmann and Kvale 2014; Allen-Collinson 2016). Despite the methodological attempts to capture descriptions of lived experience, the interviews still contained large amounts of opinions, interpretations and other ‘rational’ expressions. This fact might point to a question of greater epistemological and discursive character (as touched upon previously). The students’ accounts of movement often revealed certain well-known discourses of health, including the object-body. When it is hard to describe what it is like to bike to school in experiential terms, it might be a solution to ‘borrow’ existing dominating tales of the benefits of living an active everyday life. But the ‘borrowing’ also reveals the intentional structure and the student’s meaning processing. The dominating discourses thus weave into our interpretations of movement experience and our mode of existence. The use and re-use of existing discourses reinforces the discourses (Lupton 1995). This study is part of the reproduction of existing tales of movement as related to health and well-being, but hopefully it has also become evident that it offers alternative tales.

Implications for practice

Galvin and Todres argument for the practical application of the theory of Dwelling-mobility is: ‘If one was trying to take this framework into a more applied direction, one would be concerned with facilitating possibilities for “movement”, as well as possibilities for “letting-be-ness” at both existential and literal levels’ (2010, 6). Through this analysis we argue for

the potential of the theory as a conceptual framework in the promotion of well-being through bodily movement among high-school students and perhaps more generally.

Firstly, the students' descriptions illustrate the point of well-being as a balancing act within and between different experiential domains, revealing various possible well-being experiences. Secondly, bodily movement relates to this balancing act in several ways corresponding to both literal and metaphorical levels within the different existentials. For example, in the descriptions of bodily satisfaction related to the experience of achievement, we might be dealing with experiences of movement (mobility) at both literal and metaphorical levels: literally, in relation to the corporeal domain - the body moves and achieves goals - and metaphorically in relation to the temporal domain – a sense of achievement and moving forward.

This study can highlight the numerous aspects of the relation between well-being and movement, and thereby nuance the perspective of health-promoting physical activity. For practitioners working with the promotion of well-being among young people, such as teachers, student counsellors and sports coaches, and school leaders and politicians working at policy level, awareness and communication of the balance potential of bodily movement might be a valuable strategy. For example, advocacy of the energising effect of movement during lessons could be complemented with the message of movement as a valuable break, and the movement activity could contain elements of 'disconnecting the head'. Furthermore, practice-oriented research focusing on promotion of movement among young people may benefit from the findings of the study, by offering an in-depth insight into the phenomenon of movement as practised and experienced by the high-school students.

This study has sought to offer a new conceptualisation of bodily movement within a well-being perspective. Stressing the multidimensionality of movement, Eichberg stated that the word movement ‘expresses a deep wisdom of languages’ (2014, 6). The picture painted in this study may only illustrate a small part of this deep wisdom. Continued focus on the complexity of bodily movement in relation to health and well-being is therefore needed. In this way we continue to build an important bridge between the health sciences and the humanities.

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