Mindful walking–associations between depression, mindfulness and gait patterns

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Human gate patterns give a lot of information about person walking. For example, it is possible to derive information about gender or mood merely from dynamic gate features.

Mindfulness-based approaches stress the importance of getting in contact with the here-and-now experience of the body. Moreover, recent theories of emotion highlight the role of proprioceptive-bodily information in the generation of emotional states. Therefore, investigation of bodily processes might be a relevant target for the study of mindfulness-based approaches. In our current research we analyzed the gate patterns of 30 patients participating in a mindfulness-based cognitive therapy (MBCT), 18 acute depressive inpatients and 30 never depressed participants by fourier-based descriptions and computation of linear classifiers. The following research questions were guiding our research: (1) Do dynamic gate patterns of acute and formerly depressed patients differ from never depressed people (2) Does MBCT normalize gate patterns of formerly depressed patients?