



Dr. Kerstin Ensinger – Health and protected Areas in a changing Climate

## The health benefits of experiencing “wilderness” in the Black Forest National Park

# Overview

- One experience
- Research design, Methods and Instruments
- Results
- Conclusion

# Framework

- restorative effects of nature experience
- variance between individuals
- different types of landscapes?
- person´s inner attitude?



mindfulness?



*“Mindfulness means the awareness that arises from paying attention in a particular way; on purpose, in the present moment, and non-judgmentally.”*

Jon Kabat-Zinn 1990



# Research question:

Experience of the  
Black Forest  
Nationalpark ?

field experiment



EINE SPUR WILDER.

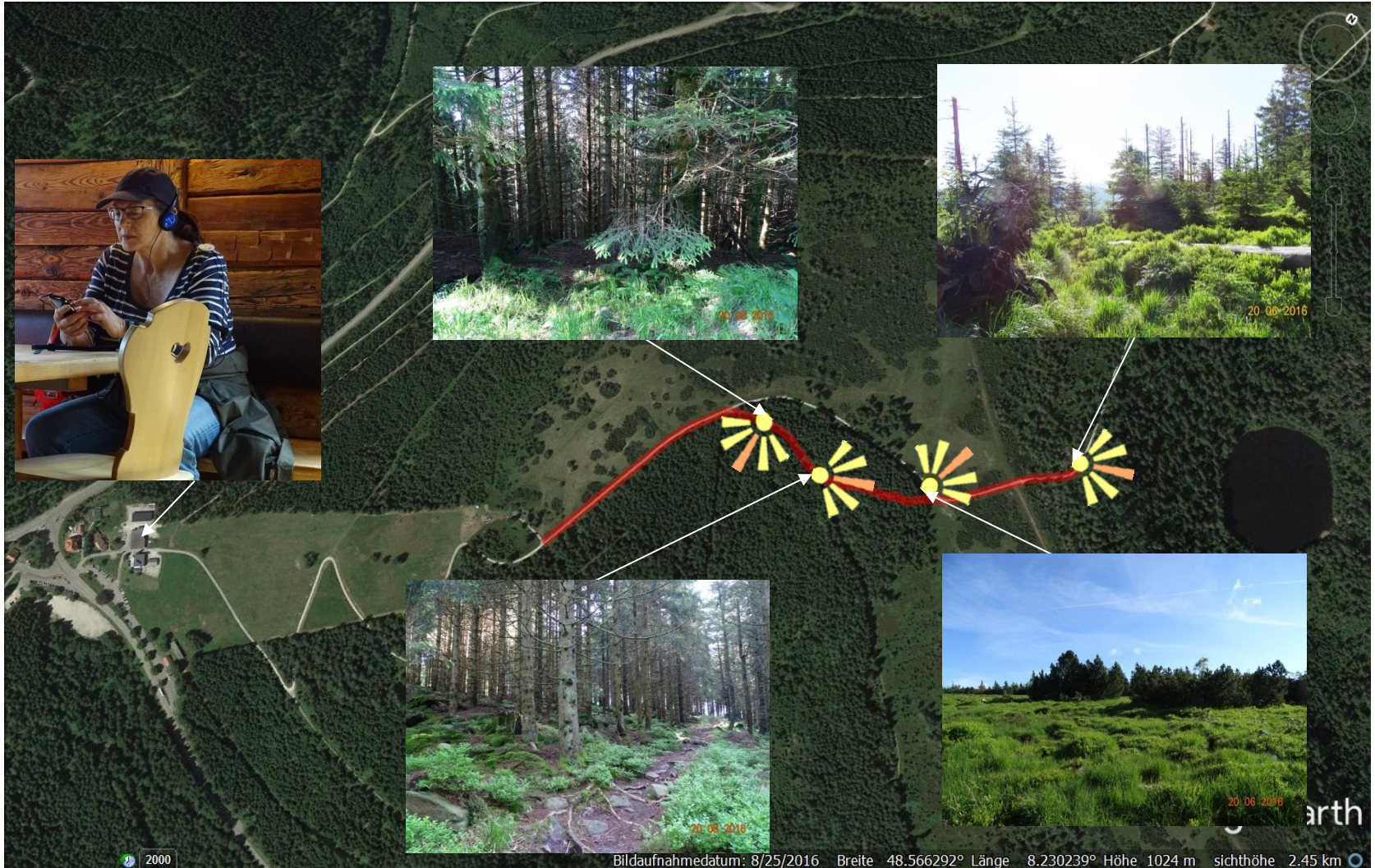


# Research Design and technical Equipment

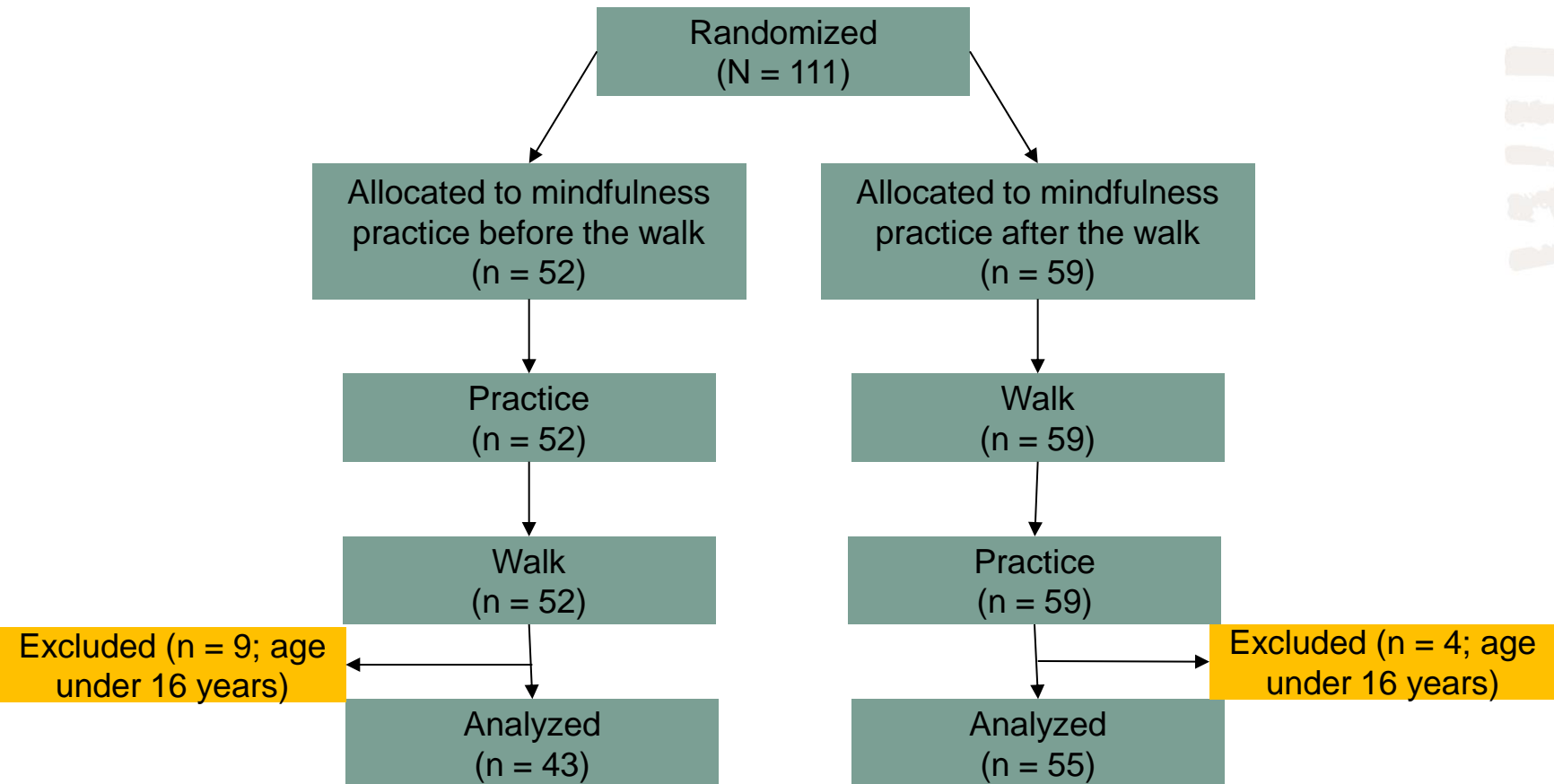




# A Walk through the Black Forest National Park



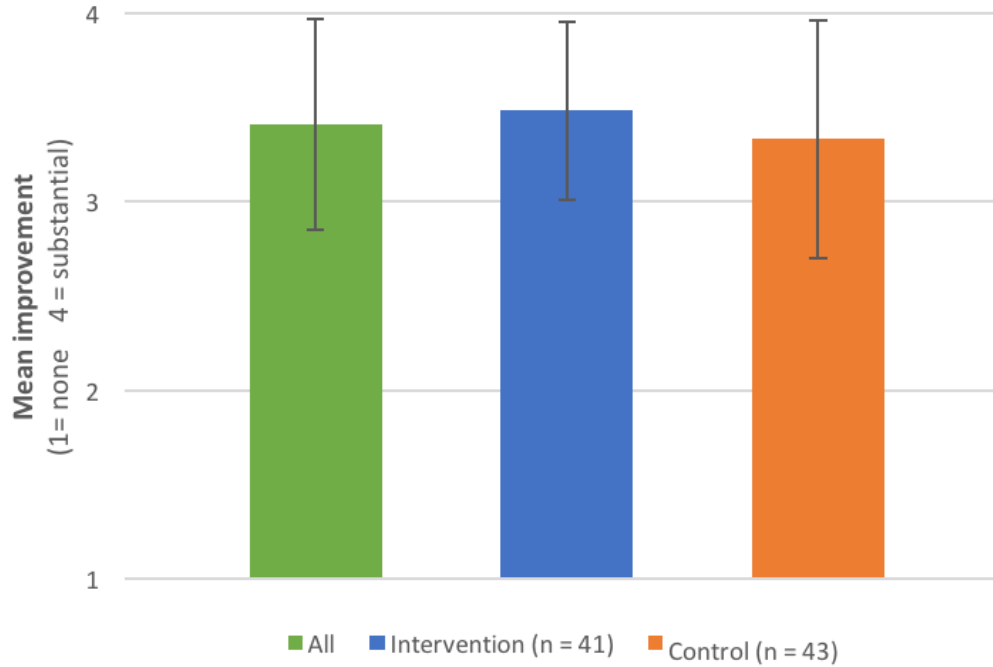
# Participant flow





sampling criteria	intervention	control
age	(n = 39) M = 47.8, SD = 15.9	(n = 37): M = 48.70, SD = 14.80
sex	(n = 39) 51.3% male, 48.7% female	(n = 37) 35.1% male, 64.9% female
already visited the Black Forest National Park?	(n = 43) Yes 88.4%, No 11.6%	(n = 54) Yes 81.5%, No 18.5%
prior mindfulness experience	(n = 43) Yes 32.6%, No 67.4%	(n = 55) Yes 30.9% No 69.1%

# benefits of the walk

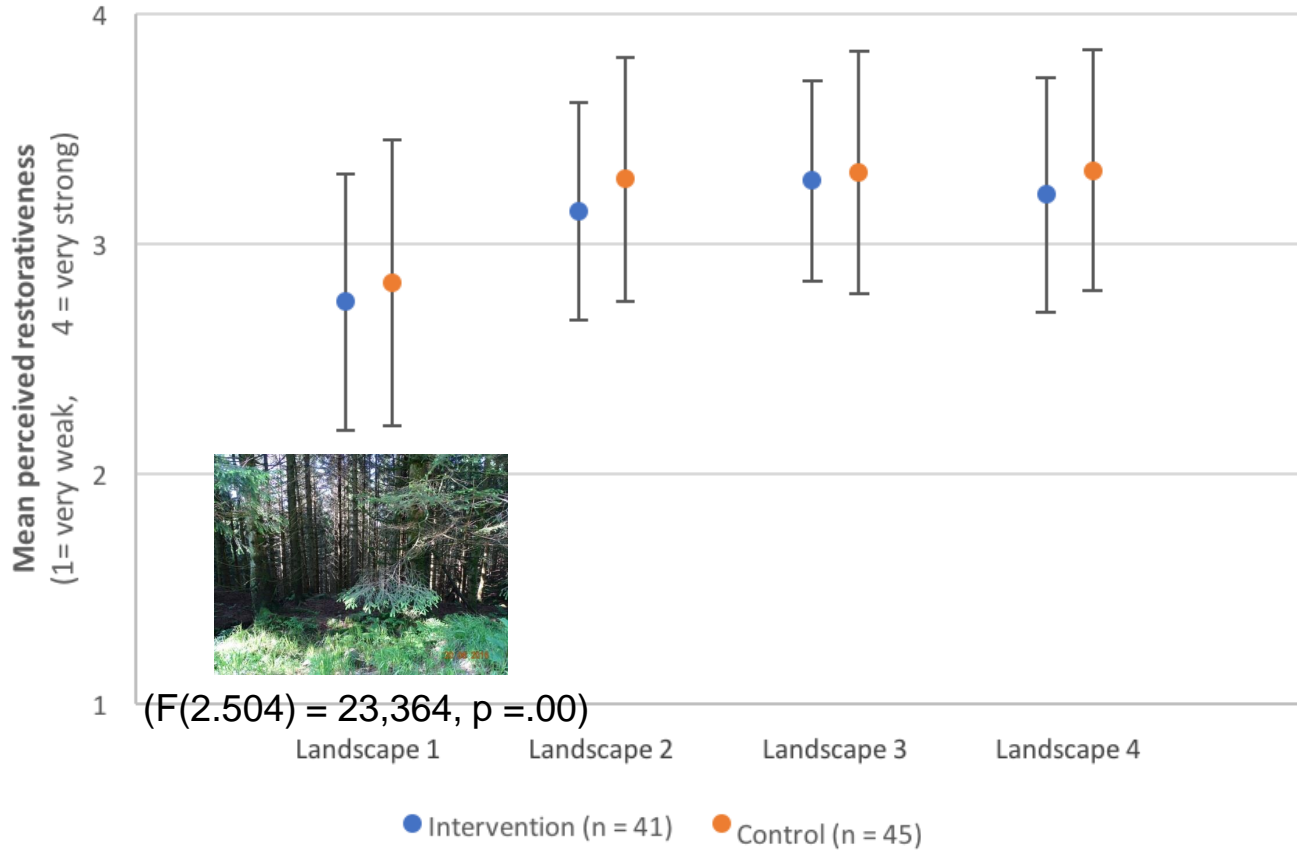


no differences between groups

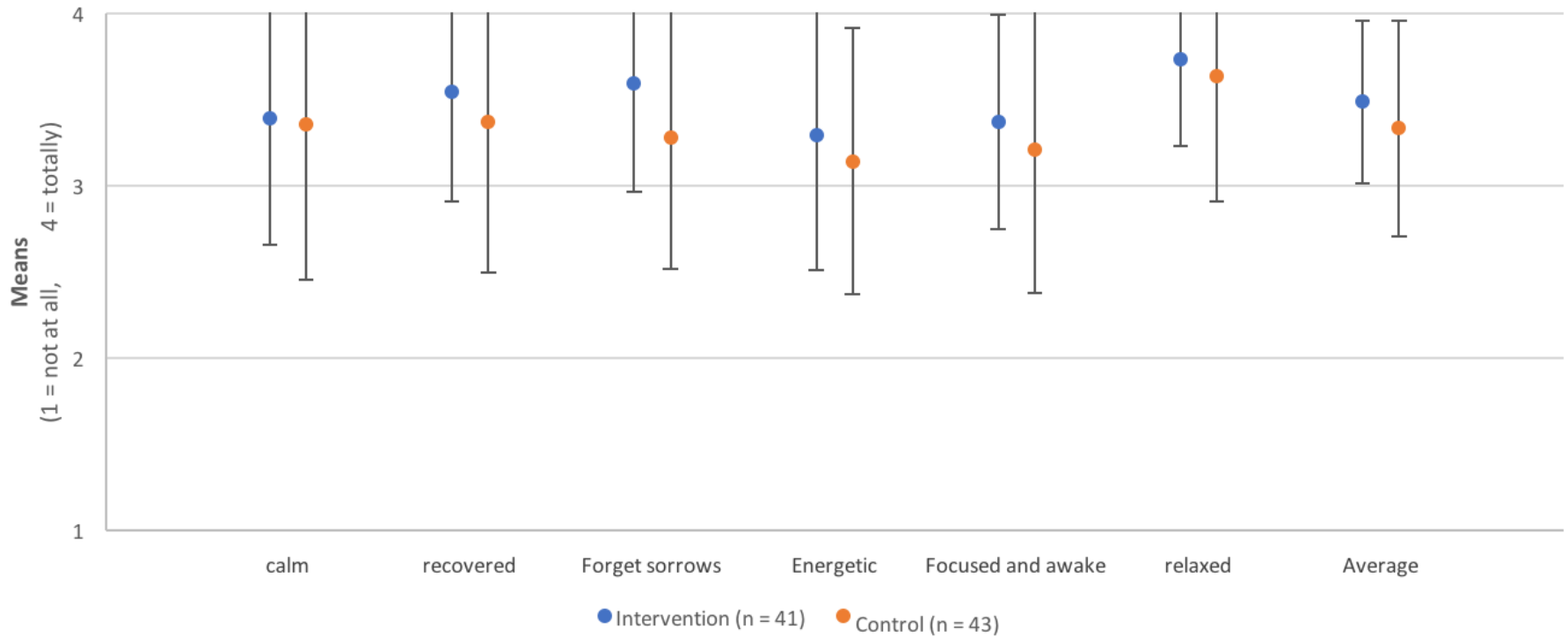
( $p = .21$ ), ( $M_{\text{Intervention}} = 3.48$ ;  $M_{\text{Control}} = 3.33$ )



# restorative characteristics of the landscapes



# mindfulness practice matters?

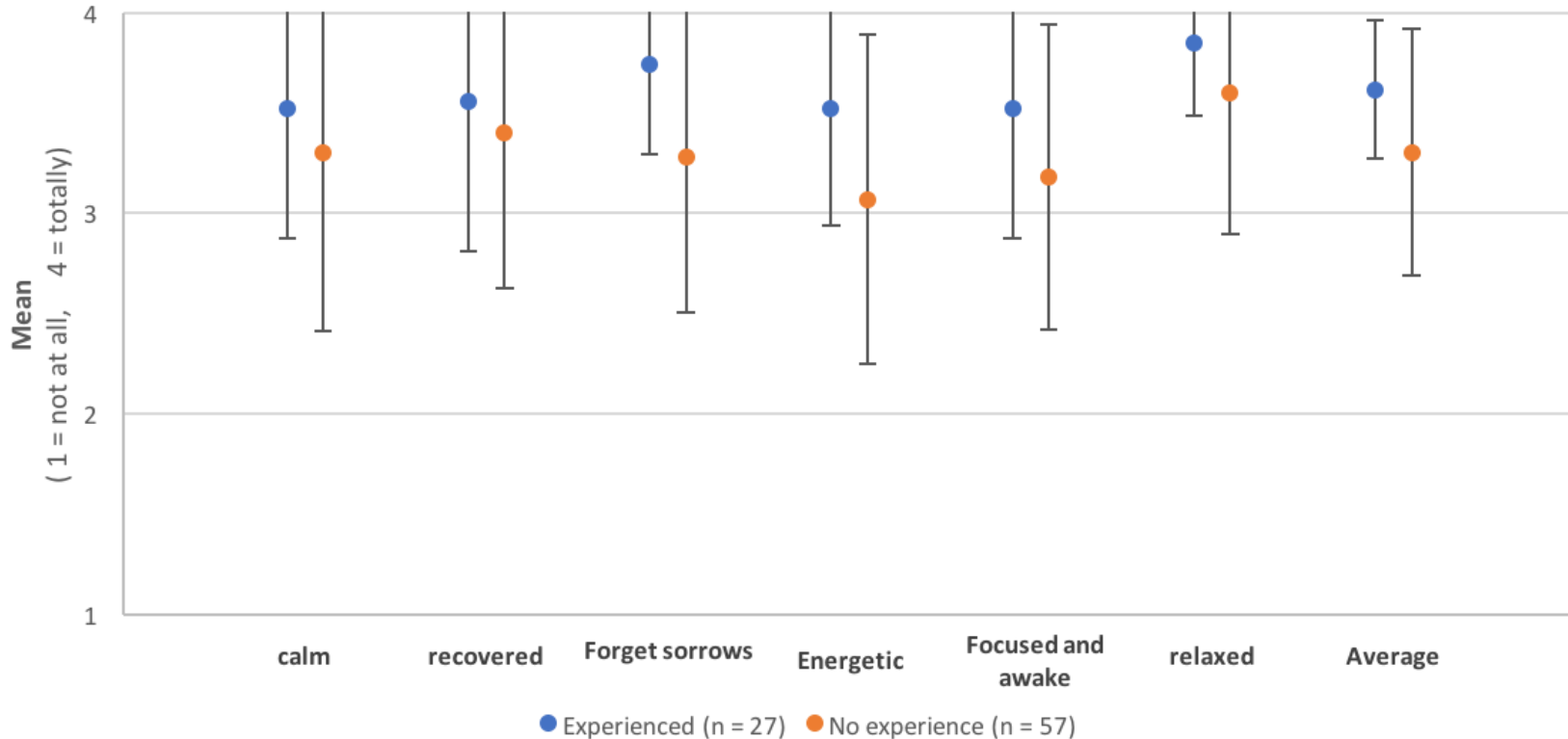


Intervention group reported to be able to stronger let go their thoughts and troubles during the walk

( $t = 1.994$ ,  $p = .05$ ; 95% bootstrap corrected CI [0.03;0.06]).

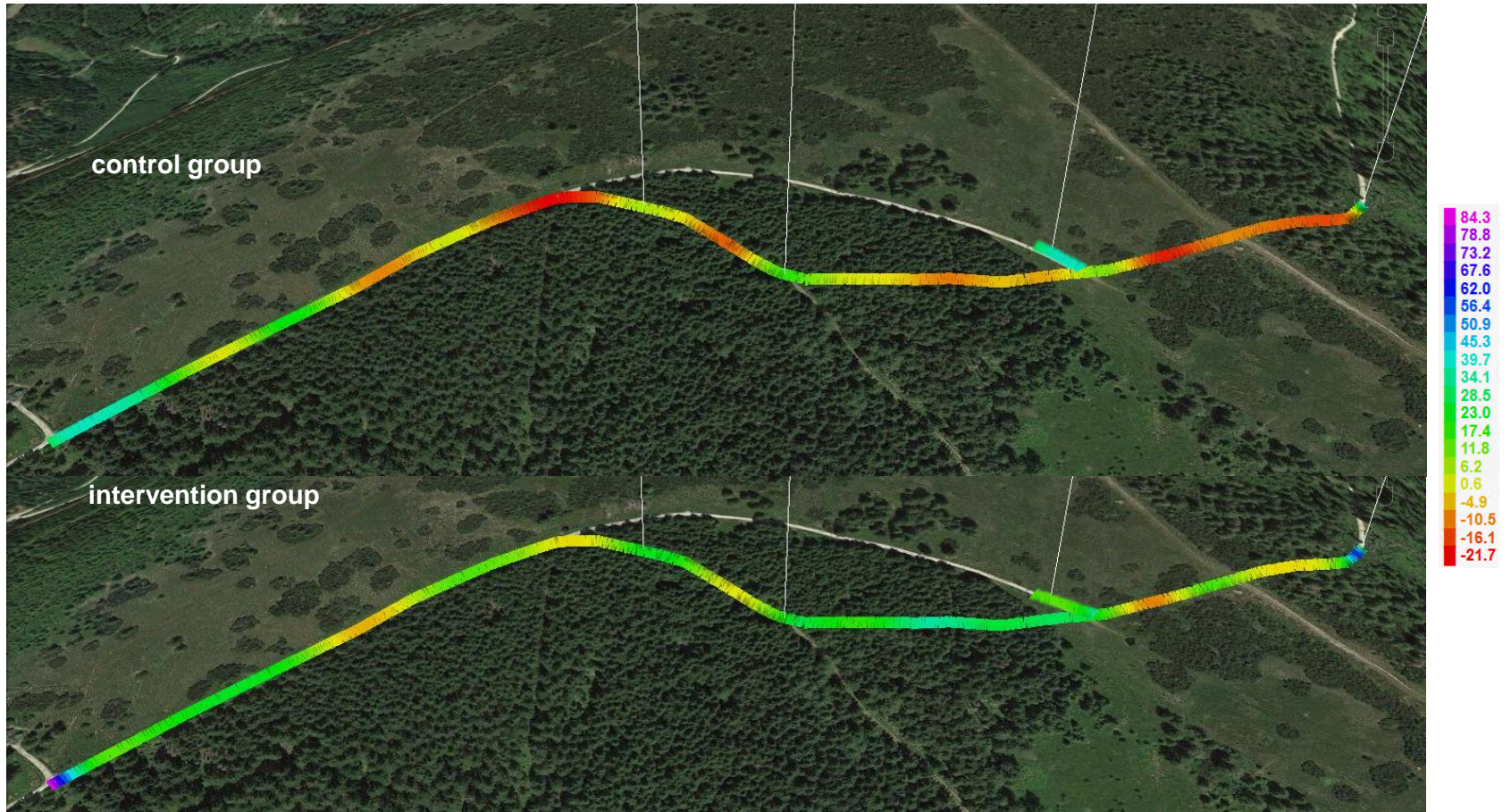


# mindfulness practice matters?



people with mindfulness experience reported more improved health and wellbeing compared to those without experience ( $t(79.455) = -2.982, p < .01$ ).

# emotional mapping





## Conclusion

- All participants benefit from the walk
- Different types of landscapes were all rated equally positive in terms of restorative characteristics
- Mindfulness: boosting & balancing ability to benefit
- National Park & Mindfulness : resource for health and wellbeing in the face of climate change
- Connect people to protected areas and mindfulness
- Further research and field studies





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