



**David Key:** Change through Nature: A Practical Guide to  
Designing Transformative Experiences of Nature



For over 20 years Dave Key has worked at the intersection of outdoor leadership, psychology, and ecology, delivering nature-based programs for wellbeing and sustainability. Discover how being in outdoor places, under the open sky, can transform personal/social life and leadership.

**TOP EMBODIMENT TIP:** Go outdoors and experience you are a part of nature.

What is the purpose of your work?

- **To realize that we are a part of nature** (which implies that we need to live sustainably!).
- To give a frame of reference for outdoor experiences to create an impact that goes beyond feeling refreshed or using nature for individual personal benefit.

What is Transformative Experience?

- A fundamental permanent **change** from one state to another.
- A **transition** into something new that cannot be reversed. Once you've made that change then it stays with you.

What are the essential ingredients that can make an outdoor experience transformational?

- There are 4 types of categories that when they come together seem to create these experiences:
  - 1. Reference to the environment.**
  - 2. Kind of Activity.**
  - 3. To become aware of new information brought up during the experience.**
  - 4. Reference to their immediate social group.**
- The facilitator combines the above and a process of transformational shift begins, where the participants see themselves as being part of a greater whole, and being part of nature implies that we need to live sustainably.

What is your job as a Facilitator and what is important?

- **Frame:** The outcome of the experience is dependent on how well it is framed. The attendees' demeanor and intention have an impact on both self and others. As the frame starts to build itself, the facilitator starts to move back and get out of the way.
- **To create a frame to try and convene the whole process in time and space.** Being present and helping people to feel safe and secure as they step into that frame and through it. To allow nature to come along and work its magic.
- **Clear intention and Self Awareness.**
- **Ontology:** How I am with my group has a disproportionately effect on the group itself.

Resources:

- ❖ **Website:** [ecoself.net](http://ecoself.net)



## David Key





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Forests Without Frontiers is a non-profit CIC dedicated to planting trees and reforesting degraded landscapes with support from a network of artists and musicians, as well as businesses and individuals working to become carbon-positive.

The initiative was founded by Nicoleta Carpineanu (aka Nico de Transylvania), a Romanian, UK-based DJ/Producer who grew up in the forests of Transylvania. We began our first key project in Romania in April 2019 and in our first year planted over 25,000 trees. We reforest land that has been clear-cut, where natural reforestation would not occur. We only plant native, biodiverse species, grown locally and cared for until maturity in legally protected areas, adjacent to existing natural forests. Our aim is to plant one million trees in the Carpathians and beyond by 2025.

**OUR MISSION** is to preserve our forests and the people and wildlife they nurture, and to promote connection with nature through music, art, and culture.