

a complete beginner's guide to

# Outdoor lifecoaching



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# THE AUTHORS



## ABOUT US

Peter Krijger and Coen van Broekhoven are experienced outdoor lifecoaches and teach coaches, trainers and other professionals all over the world their unique method. So the professionals maximize their clients' results and also tap into their own natural powers.

Peter is the founder of the Outdoor Lifecoach Method and the Atma Institute, one of the biggest institutes for Lifecoaching in the Netherlands. And he has 35+ years of experience in therapy and coaching. He developed his outdoor method 20 years ago.

Coen is an experienced outdoor lifecoach and also a teacher of Outdoor Lifecoaching. He has learned the outdoor method from Peter and has developed his own style of outdoor lifecoaching.



"In every walk with nature one receives far more than he seeks."

- John Muir

# Outdoor Life Coaching

## **What is Life Coaching?**

A life coach helps people to shape their own lives based on their deepest desires and talents. Life Coaching is a form of coaching in which the whole life of a person is scrutinized and in which the client is stimulated to take charge of designing his or her life. Both professional and personal life are dealt with. Special attention is given to the balance between work and leisure, increasing self-confidence, stress management, communication skills, developing talents, coordinating career planning with life planning, improving relationships and developing a positive vision of the future. The primary goal of Life Coaching is deepening life's happiness and success.

## **What is Outdoor Life Coaching?**

An extra dimension is being added to the process of Life Coaching by going outdoors. Both the coach and the client are being inspired by the large variety of wisdom and power that is hidden in nature. Furthermore, nature has a relaxing influence on both body and mind, which contributes strongly to gaining deep insights and to experience a deep state of emotions.

The coach and the client have the ability to use the rich variety of plants, animals, objects, landscapes and even the changes in the weather in various creative ways. Nature is also absolutely useful to serve as a symbol of the mental and emotional processes of the client. The combination of the riches of the environment and all sorts of physical activities provides the coach and the client with great strength, depth and resources.

The symbolism of nature is constantly involved in the coaching process during Outdoor Life Coaching. Nature is actually considered to be a 'second coach'. In order to get this process going, the coach will ask three basic questions: "What do you notice in the surroundings around you?", "What symbolizes that for you personally?" and "What do you feel?".

## Walking

Walking is one of the most important activities of Outdoor Life Coaching. This form of coaching literally gets the coach and the client 'going' and therefore the mental and emotional processes are also set in motion and the brain is stimulated. The paths in nature that the coach and client take, symbolise the actual paths that the client takes in life. With every step, the coach and client see the environment changes, just like the vision on the path of life. By walking and talking simultaneously, head and body – or rather mind and emotions – are connected. Creativity, intuition and intellectual clarity are also strongly stimulated by walking.

## Integration of weather and the climate

One can always use the method of Outdoor Life Coaching in every climate and under any weather conditions. We integrate the condition and the changes in the weather during the coaching sessions.

The sun, for example, may symbolise enlightening insights or warm feelings. Clouds also have a language of their own. It occurs often that the sun suddenly comes out when a client gets a clear insight while he or she is talking.

Rain can stir up feelings of grief that have not yet been properly dealt with or it can 'wash away' issues that are over and done. The wind may send the message that things have to get going. When there is no wind then this could symbolise inner peace or the lull before the storm.

When it is cold this may reflect inner coldness and it may encourage the client to seek inner warmth. Lightning is a fantastic natural phenomenon; it may symbolise working out a conflict or ambivalences in life. But it could also mean cheerful fireworks. We emphasise while practising Life Coaching outdoors, that not any interpretation is fixed. The client gives personal meaning to each natural phenomenon.



## CHAPTER 2

# The Environment as a Second Coach

*The difference between outdoor coaching and other forms of coaching and therapy is the use of the environment. This has a huge impact on the process of the client and yourself.*

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Using the environment as a third element is typical for outdoor life coaching and because of this, the use of special outdoor techniques is important.

The essence of outdoor life coaching is in the environment.

Everything around you can be utilised and provides constant insight and inspiration. The environment is a mirror of the inner self, so everything around you contributes to the coaching process: people, animals, plants, trees, flowers, paths, streets, houses, shops, palaces, cars, text on signs, etc.

The environment can be made known in a symbolic way during walking sessions. There are many ways to establish the connection between the environment and the coachee.

During outdoor life coaching, the symbolism of the environment is a constant, intentional part of the coaching process.

In fact, the environment is considered as a kind of 'second coach'!

## CHAPTER 3

# The 3 Basic Questions

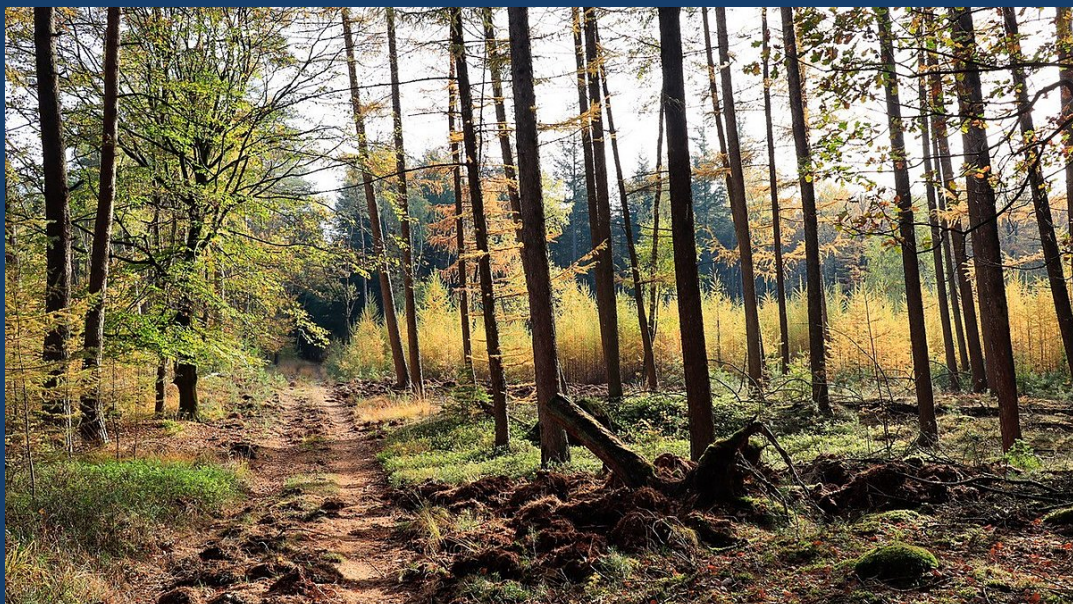
To use nature as a second coach and reflect upon the inner self, we use 3 basic questions.

These questions are:

1. What do you notice?
2. What does it mean or symbolizes to you?
3. How do you feel about that?

Using the first question 'What do you notice?', will instantly bring nature into play. This is a very powerful question which gives a client the opportunity to reflect upon the inner self through nature.

These 3 questions have no particular order and can be constantly asked during the coaching process. Also, they can be used in all kinds of nature elements. Like landscapes, junctions, trees, puddles, obstacles etc.





## CHAPTER 4

# Applying the Questions in Action

### During a walk

Start walking with someone for a while to come in the here and now. Then start a conversation about a certain topic. Talk a bit about the topic and then ask the person: 'What do you notice?'

**Example:** After walking for a while, the coach asks: 'What do you notice?'. The client says: 'The path goes very straight into a forest with trees that have been planted regularly. It is boring and we walk through loose sand. That is difficult. The environment and the trees are the same.' 'What does that symbolize?', asks the coach. 'If I continue to live like this, everything will stay the same and I will progress slowly and with difficulty. In the way I live now, I no longer feel any challenges.', says the client.

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### On a junction

If there is a split or junction on the path, you can use the basic questions to reflect upon that. What does the junction or split tell you?

**Example:** After a few minutes walking we reach a fork. We can choose from two paths. 'Which way do you want to go now?', the coach asks. 'I don't know this forest. Isn't it better that you choose?', says the client. 'It is better that you determine the direction. This forest symbolizes your life', says the coach. The client keeps looking at the junction for a while. 'What do you notice when you look at both paths?', the coach asks. 'The path on the right is dark, the path on the left is light. I like the trees along the dark path because they are very old. There are only young trees along the left path, but it is lighter.', says the client. After looking for a while, the client says: 'I choose the left path because I love light.'

## With an object

When you come across an object, like a puddle or an obstacle like a fallen tree across the path, you can reflect upon that with the basic questions.

**Example:** After walking for a while a path with many large puddles appears. The client stops and looks at them. 'What could those puddles symbolize for you?', the coach asks. 'That puddle is like a mirror in which I see myself and my environment reflected. It will be quite a job to walk that path.', says the client. And walks to the edge of a puddle and looks into it. 'This path is like my career', the client says, 'and the puddles are my mirrors. They ensure that I don't run too fast and regularly stop to reflect.' 'Is that important to you?', the coach asks. 'That's really important! I have been walking through my life like a headless chicken lately. It is time for me to take it easy and think better about myself and my future.', says the client.



# The Outdoor Lifecoach Method

Working outdoors as a professional is really magical and inspires you to be very creative and intuitive.

For clients, the results are phenomenal, because of the **bilateral brain-stimulation** that takes places with walking and the energy and **surroundings of nature** that **stimulates the body**.

Therefore the process of development goes much faster and deeper for your clients, which results in lasting transformations.

Coaching outdoors is not very known and there is no training to follow. Because the results are so phenomenal every time, on different problems and areas of life, we share this powerful wisdom and train professionals all over the world.

The real power of our method lies in the fact that it can be integrated in every profession and expertise, as well as standalone. So it is suitable for starters and experienced professionals. So you don't have to throw aboard everything you already know. You just integrate and bring yourself, your profession and your clients' results to a much higher and deeper level, in a very simple way. In fact so simple, that you can learn the basics in just 1 day!

Do you want to know more about our training?

Our regards,

**Peter Krijger & Coen van Broekhoven**

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Yes, I want more info about the training

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