

The Working

A wish, rooted. The evidence-backed shape of intention.

A working is a deliberate act toward an intention — and it turns out the research agrees with the old instinct that wishing alone isn't enough. In studies across weight loss, exams, work, and love, people who only pictured the happy ending did *worse*: the mind tastes the wish as if it's already fulfilled, and the body relaxes. A vision left as a vision stays one.

What works is the full shape: name the wish, feel its outcome, then turn and face what stands in the way — and bind it to a plan. The planning step alone, in the "if this, then I will that" form below, showed a medium-to-large effect on people actually reaching their goals across a meta-analysis of 94 studies with more than 8,000 people. This room walks that shape, movement by movement.

FIRST MOVEMENT

The Wish

One line. Real, and reachable within a season you can name.

Not the whole dreamed life — one wish, meaningful and possible, with a timeframe you believe. "I want to finish the first draft by winter." "I want to stop going silent when I'm hurt." One line is the discipline.

My wish is...

SECOND MOVEMENT

The Outcome

Feel it fully — and briefly. The savoring is allowed. The staying is what backfires.

If the wish came true, what's the best thing about it? How does it feel in the body — relief, pride, lightness, room to breathe? Write it vividly. A few sentences, fully felt. Then move: the research is clear that this feeling, lingered in, quietly replaces the doing.

The best thing about it would be...

THIRD MOVEMENT

The Obstacle Within

Not the world's obstacle. Yours. This is the movement most workings skip — and it's the one that makes the difference.

What in *you* stands between you and the wish? A habit, a fear, an old story, the phone, the flinch, the voice that says who are you to want this. Name it honestly — if it has roots in older ground, Shadow Work and the Trigger Mirror know this territory.

What stands in the way, in me, is...

FOURTH MOVEMENT

The Binding

If this, then I will that. The form matters — it's the one the 94 studies tested.

Now bind the obstacle to an action, in exactly this shape: "If [the moment the obstacle shows up], then I will [the specific thing I do]." The if names a real moment you'll recognize; the then is small and concrete enough to actually do in that moment. Write one. Add a second and third if they come.

If..., then I will...

If..., then I will...

If..., then I will...

CLOSE

Seal it in one line of your own — wish, obstacle, and binding in a single sentence you could say out loud.

I will..., and when..., I will...

Workings hold better with tending. Come back when the wish shifts or the obstacle changes shape — revise the binding rather than abandoning it.

A BLESSING ON THIS WORK

This work is a gift. Share it freely with anyone who needs it — print it, copy it, pass it on whole. It is not for sale, by us or by anyone, and it shouldn't be changed. Above all, keep the crisis lines and the words about seeking professional help exactly as they are — for someone, those may be the lines that matter most. It exists to help people heal, and to raise the vibration of the world. That will never cost anything here.

— Aether & Root · aetherandroot.com/inner-work