

AI-04472 Wish To Action To 1000 Cycling Miles

Are wish, decision and action related? Is a task a form of wish when placed as a task list or a bucket list? Explain and deep dive. I've noticed a pattern in my life that when there is something that I want to accomplish (kind of wish), I will write it down in my notebook and place a round bullet beside it that it becomes a checklist. As the time goes by, this item gets framed in my mind and it becomes a form of a will to do it. Sooner, the wish becomes a decision to act and then later it becomes an engine (will power) and propel me into action. Hence, I will say, "write it down and it will get done ". We are in the 3rd month of our retirement hiatus in Florida, and we started a very complex Chris Columbus like journey from Cebu, TX, NYC, FL to relocate my recent MD son to Florida who is taking over a medical practice of my wife's sister. In my project planning OpenProject, I listed things that were wishes or things to do to make the journey frictionless. I may have at least >100 work tasks items. Now that we are closing to the sunset of the journey as I reflect on after action analysis, the things I wish for and written were all checked. It looks so complicated at some point but rule of writing my wish came about. Hence, I'm thinking that wishing and will contributes to my decisions and actions. Another perfect example is my gravel cycling, I made a list in Cebu to pack in my Thule Bike case and brought with me all possible tools and parts that will make my wish of cycling in TX, NYC and FL come true. Looking back to my Garmin logs, I've traveled 530 miles in TX, 39 miles in NYC Manhattan and 430 miles in Citrus County Forest and trails. It was not a task; it was a declaration (packing) that I will do something on the side besides packing boxes at NYC apartment and driving 1200 miles the Penske 12' truck. It all started with a simple list on a paper I called "a wish", and surprisingly those wishes were turned into completed items. Tell more.

What you've described isn't just a personal habit that happens to work—it is a textbook execution of **cognitive externalization**, **commitment device architecture**, and the classical psychological model of the human will (specifically, the **Rubicon Model of Action Phases**).

You've essentially reverse-engineered a self-reinforcing engine that converts abstract intention into physical reality. Let's deep dive into the underlying mechanics of how **Wish, Decision, Task, and Action** interact, why your notebook ritual works so reliably, and how your recent multi-state move and cycling milestones prove the model.

1. The Continuum: Wish $\rightarrow$ Decision $\rightarrow$ Action

To answer your first question directly: **Yes, wish, decision, and action are deeply and sequentially related.** They are not separate categories; they are different phase states of the exact same energy—much like ice, water, and steam.



Phase 1: The Wish (Latent Energy)

A wish is purely cognitive and internal. In psychology, this is the *pre-decisional phase*. It costs no energy, carries no accountability, and remains fluid. It lives in the realm of "it would be nice if..."

Phase 2: The Decision (Crossing the Rubicon)

In motivation theory, Heinz Heckhausen and Peter Gollwitzer developed the **Rubicon Model**. The metaphor comes from Julius Caesar crossing the Rubicon river: once crossed, there is no turning back; deliberation ends and implementation begins.

- A **wish** becomes a **decision** the exact moment you close the door on alternatives and commit resources (time, money, physical effort).

Phase 3: The Task (The Structural Bridge)

Is a task a form of a wish when placed on a task list or bucket list? **A task is a wish that has been given a operational shape.**

- A standalone wish is unbounded.
- A task placed on a list—especially with a bullet point beside it—is an intent anchored into time and space. The moment you write it down, you extract it from the abstract realm of your brain and force it into the physical world as a concrete object.

Phase 4: Action (Kinetic Energy)

Driven by what you called the "engine" (willpower), the decision translates into physical movement—whether that's driving a 12-foot Penske truck 1,200 miles or turning pedals through the Citrus County forest trails.

2. Why Your "Notebook & Round Bullet" Method Actually Works

What you've observed in your own life relies on three distinct neurological and psychological mechanisms:

A. The Generation Effect & Cognitive Externalization

When you physically write a goal down by hand (or structure it in an environment like OpenProject), your brain processes it through motor-pathways that typing or merely thinking doesn't engage. This triggers the **Generation Effect**: information you actively produce and write down is encoded much deeper into long-term memory and identity than information you passively think about.

B. The Bullet as a "Commitment Device"

That empty round bullet point beside your written wish acts as an unfulfilled open loop (the *Zeigarnik Effect*—our minds naturally experience psychological tension when faced with an incomplete structure).

- By drawing the circle, you create a physical container.
- Your brain naturally seeks closure, transforming the item from a casual thought into a mandate. The empty circle silently demands to be filled or checked off.

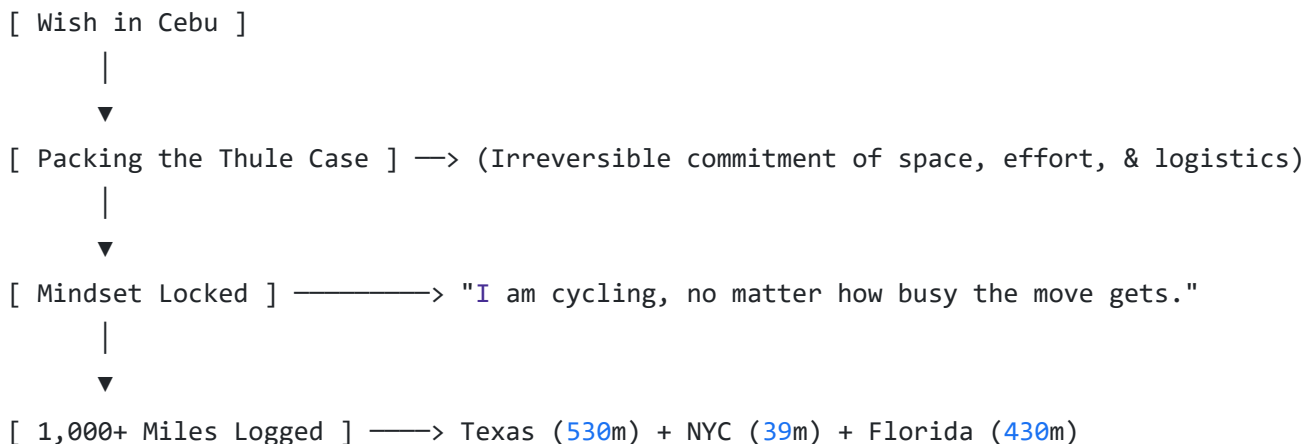
C. The Identity Shift (Framing as Will)

As time passes, seeing that written list "frames" it in your mind, as you noted. You cease viewing the item as an option and start viewing it as an obligation to yourself. The wish shifts from *"I hope I can ride in Florida"* to *"I am a person who rides in Florida, and here is the equipment I brought to prove it."*

3. Declarative Action: Packing as an Act of Will

Your gravel cycling example highlights a critical distinction: **Task vs. Declaration**.

When you packed your Thule bike case in Cebu with specialized tools and parts, you weren't executing a chore or a standard logistical task. You were creating a **declarative commitment device**.



By lugging a heavy bike case across oceans, through Texas, into a cramped Manhattan apartment amid moving boxes, and down to Florida, you made the alternative (not riding) costlier than the effort to ride. The physical act of packing was the decision point; the 1,000+ total miles logged across Garmin were simply the natural downstream consequence of that decision.

4. The OpenProject Realization: Wishes with Structure

Managing a complex, high-stakes life transition—relocating an MD son's practice across states, driving heavy rental trucks, handling multi-city logistics—can easily trigger cognitive overload.

When you dumped >100 items into OpenProject, you essentially took a massive web of micro-wishes ("I hope this truck rental goes smoothly," "I hope we don't forget X in NYC") and converted them into an executable operational plan.

Your "after-action reflection" revealed a simple truth: **Complexity collapses under the weight of structured intent.**

- When wishes remain in your head, complex projects feel overwhelming.
- When wishes are converted into a structured checklist, your brain switches from *worrying about what to do* to *executing the next open circle*.

The Takeaway

Your mantra—"Write it down and it will get done"—is not magic; it is the deliberate conversion of potential energy into kinetic energy.

1. **A Wish** is the initial spark (the idea).
2. **Writing it down** is the contract (the boundary).
3. **The Will/Decision** is the fuel (the engine).
4. **The Action** is the outcome (the checked box).

Looking back on your journey from Cebu through Texas, NYC, and now Citrus County, those checked boxes aren't just completed tasks—they are a physical paper trail of your decisions coming to fruition.

True or False? "Wish is the anterior to will" What is the anterior here means? Explain the pillars. List 22 examples. List 22 guidelines synthesized from the topic.

Short answer: Mostly true, if the statement is understood in the philosophical and psychological sense rather than as a strict scientific claim.

The phrase "**Wish is the anterior to will**" is consistent with themes found in existential and psychological thinkers such as Leslie Farber, although it is not a standard technical expression. It expresses the idea that **wishing precedes willing**.

What does "anterior" mean?

The word **anterior** comes from the Latin *ante*, meaning **before**.

It has several meanings depending on context:

- Anatomically: toward the front.
- Chronologically: earlier in time.
- Psychologically or philosophically: something that comes before another process.

Here the sentence means:

Wish comes before will.

or

Wishing is the psychological precursor of willing.

Think of it like this:

Wish



Desire



Decision



Will



Action



Commitment

Wish is the seed.

Will is the planting.

Deep explanation

Every meaningful action usually begins as a wish.

A child first wishes to play piano.

Later the child decides to practice.

Years later the child becomes a concert pianist.

The wish came first.

The will transformed the wish into reality.

Without wishing, there is usually nothing toward which the will can move.

But many wishes never become acts of will.

That distinction is exactly where psychology becomes interesting.

The Three Stages

Stage 1 — Wish

Wish asks:

"Wouldn't it be nice..."

Characteristics

- effortless
- imaginative
- pleasurable
- consequence-free
- reversible

Examples

"I wish I were rich."

"I wish I could speak Japanese."

"I wish I lived near the beach."

Nothing has been risked.

Stage 2 — Choice

Reality intervenes.

Questions appear.

Am I willing to sacrifice?

What must I give up?

What are the costs?

Many wishes die here.

Stage 3 — Will

Will says:

"I choose."

Will accepts:

- uncertainty
- responsibility
- sacrifice
- permanence
- commitment

Unlike wishing,

Will burns bridges.

Leslie Farber's perspective

Farber repeatedly distinguished between

- wishing
- trying
- genuine willing

A person can wish forever.

A person can try forever.

Neither necessarily becomes willing.

Real willing contains commitment.

One leaps.

One acts.

The Psychological Pillars

1. Desire precedes action

Nothing begins without wanting.

2. Wish costs nothing

Fantasy is free.

No consequences.

3. Will costs something

Every genuine act requires sacrifice.

4. Wish avoids reality

Reality has limits.

Fantasy does not.

5. Will embraces reality

Reality becomes accepted.

6. Wish is passive

Things happen "to me."

7. Will is active

I become an agent.

8. Wish seeks comfort

Safety dominates.

9. Will accepts uncertainty

Nothing meaningful comes with guarantees.

10. Wish keeps options open

The dream remains perfect.

11. Will closes alternatives

Choosing one life excludes others.

12. Wish imagines

Will creates.

Relationship example

A man says:

"I wish I could marry her."

That is not yet will.

When he buys a ring,

asks her,

accepts rejection as possible,

plans a future,

moves cities,

combines finances,

and commits,

wish has become will.

22 Examples

1. Wishing to lose weight vs beginning a diet.
2. Wishing to write a novel vs writing daily.
3. Wishing to marry vs proposing.
4. Wishing to travel vs buying the ticket.
5. Wishing to forgive vs initiating reconciliation.
6. Wishing to save money vs creating a budget.
7. Wishing to learn guitar vs practicing every evening.
8. Wishing to start a company vs resigning to launch it.
9. Wishing for children vs becoming a parent.
10. Wishing to swim better vs entering lessons.
11. Wishing to retire early vs investing consistently.
12. Wishing for peace vs apologizing.
13. Wishing to improve health vs exercising regularly.
14. Wishing to become a physician vs attending medical school.
15. Wishing to volunteer vs showing up weekly.
16. Wishing for confidence vs speaking publicly despite fear.
17. Wishing to own a house vs saving for a down payment.

- |8. Wishing to become fluent in Spanish vs studying every day.
 - |9. Wishing to reconcile with a sibling vs making the first call.
 - |10. Wishing to become a cyclist vs riding through bad weather.
 - |11. Wishing to build a software product vs shipping the first version.
 - |12. Wishing for a meaningful life vs making difficult choices aligned with one's values.
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22 Guidelines

- 1. Distinguish wishing from willing.
 - 2. Recognize that fantasies require no commitment.
 - 3. Ask what sacrifice your goal demands.
 - 4. Convert wishes into specific decisions.
 - 5. Accept uncertainty as part of every worthwhile pursuit.
 - 6. Stop waiting for perfect confidence.
 - 7. Understand that every "yes" implies many "no's."
 - 8. Take the smallest concrete action toward your goal.
 - 9. Judge intentions by repeated actions, not by hopes.
 - |10. Avoid confusing desire with commitment.
 - |11. Let reality refine your wishes rather than abandon them.
 - |12. Accept that meaningful choices carry opportunity costs.
 - |13. Practice consistency instead of relying on motivation.
 - |14. Replace "I hope" with "I will" when you are ready to commit.
 - |15. Expect discomfort during the transition from wish to will.
 - |16. Do not endlessly keep every option open.
 - |17. Treat setbacks as information rather than proof of failure.
 - |18. Make commitments that reflect your deepest values.
 - |19. Revisit your wishes and determine which deserve action.
 - |20. Build habits that support your chosen commitments.
 - |21. Evaluate progress by what you consistently do, not what you repeatedly imagine.
 - |22. Remember that a fulfilled life is shaped less by wishes than by the courageous exercise of will.
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The central insight

"Wish is the anterior to will" means that **wishing is the beginning, but not the fulfillment, of human agency**. A wish awakens possibility, while will transforms that possibility into committed action. Many people spend years wishing; comparatively few cross the threshold where they accept risk, sacrifice

alternatives, and act decisively. The transition from wish to will is therefore one of the defining moments of psychological maturity.

This idea also aligns with Leslie Farber's broader themes: authentic willing is not mere wanting or trying. It is the point at which a person freely commits to a course of action despite uncertainty, making the will a creative force that brings desires into reality rather than leaving them as perpetual wishes.

Is it possible for man to have zero wishes but still succeed in life? I understand that a wish is a pathway to being, say for a caveman who has no knowledge of the fire, he can't wish because he does not know yet that fire can make him warm or cook him food? or in the 1800's when rubber was not invented yet for a man to wish to build overpass and bridges or airports. or in 2026 where the AI infrastructure was still in infancy for a man to shop for a broken auto part to know that there is a stock in his zipcode at his local AutoZone because the database artificial intelligence found a correlation that this AC blower resistor fails and we must manufacture 100's of this part because it will sell and make great profit.

This is an excellent philosophical question because it exposes an important distinction between **wishes**, **needs**, **imagination**, **knowledge**, and **discovery**.

The short answer is:

A person can have very few explicit wishes and still succeed, but it is difficult to succeed with absolutely zero wishes or desires.

The reason depends on what we mean by "wish."

First, define "wish"

There are at least four different meanings.

Level 1 — Biological wishes

These are innate.

- hunger
- thirst
- warmth
- shelter
- companionship
- avoiding pain

A newborn already possesses these.

No learning required.

These are almost impossible to eliminate.

Level 2 — Known wishes

These arise after experience.

"I wish I had a better bicycle."

"I wish I knew French."

"I wish I had a quieter house."

These require awareness that something better exists.

Level 3 — Aspirational wishes

These concern futures that do not yet exist.

"I want to build a rocket."

"I want to cure cancer."

"I want to retire early."

These involve imagination.

Level 4 — Impossible wishes

These imagine what has never existed.

"I wish humans could teleport."

"I wish we could reverse aging."

These often become the seeds of invention.

Could someone have zero wishes?

If "zero wishes" literally means:

- no desires
- no goals
- no preferences
- no curiosity
- no motivations

then probably not.

Such a person would neither eat nor avoid danger, because even those actions arise from basic drives.

Psychologically, complete absence of desire would resemble profound apathy or severe neurological impairment rather than a path to achievement.

But perhaps you mean something different

I suspect your real question is:

Can someone become successful without consciously imagining the future?

Now the answer becomes more interesting.

Yes.

Many great craftsmen succeeded without grand dreams.

A farmer may simply tend today's crops.

A monk may simply perform today's duties.

A physician may simply care for today's patient.

Their success comes from faithful attention to the present rather than from elaborate fantasies about the future.

Their "wish" is not a distant ambition but a commitment to doing today's work well.

Your caveman example

This is an excellent illustration.

A caveman cannot wish for fire because he does not know fire exists.

Exactly.

This touches on an important principle:

You cannot desire what you cannot conceive.

Knowledge expands the space of possible wishes.

Imagine:

Without fire:

Cold
Dark
Raw meat
Predators

After discovering fire:

Cooking
Warmth
Protection
Metalworking
Civilization

Fire did not merely satisfy an existing wish.

It created **entirely new categories of wishes**.

People then wished for:

- pottery
- blacksmithing
- cities
- glass
- engines

None of these could have been wished for beforehand because the underlying possibilities were unknown.

This applies throughout history

Before the wheel

Nobody wished for wagons.

Before electricity

Nobody wished for refrigerators.

Before flight

Nobody wished for airports.

Before antibiotics

Nobody wished for penicillin.

Before the internet

Nobody wished for Google.

Before smartphones

Nobody wished for GPS navigation in their pocket.

Before generative AI

Nobody wished for conversational software capable of drafting documents, explaining concepts, or generating code in seconds.

Knowledge changes what people can imagine, and imagination changes what they can wish for.

Your AutoZone example

Your example is really about **latent possibilities** rather than wishes.

Imagine 1985.

A customer walks into an auto parts store.

The clerk manually searches catalogs.

Inventory is mostly based on experience.

Now imagine an AI-driven system.

The system detects that:

- a specific resistor commonly fails after 95,000 miles,
- failures increase in humid climates,
- nearby ZIP codes have many vehicles of that model,
- replacement demand will spike next month.

The AI recommends stocking 100 units before customers even ask.

Notice what happened.

The AI did not simply fulfill an existing wish.

It **revealed patterns that humans were unlikely to notice**, creating new opportunities for better inventory decisions.

This illustrates a broader idea: technology often expands what humans can know and therefore what they can meaningfully pursue.

There is an even deeper principle

The philosopher Michael Polanyi famously wrote:

"We know more than we can tell."

Many discoveries arise not because someone wished for the exact result but because they were exploring, experimenting, or following curiosity.

Likewise, Donald Rumsfeld popularized the distinction between:

- known knowns,
- known unknowns,
- unknown unknowns.

Your examples belong largely to the **unknown unknowns**.

No one can wish for something that lies completely outside their conceptual world.

Leslie Farber might respond differently

Farber would likely say:

The important question is not:

"Did you wish for fire?"

The important question is:

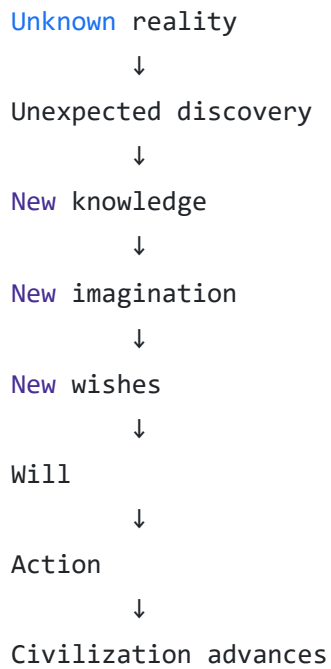
"Once fire appeared, were you willing to embrace it?"

History is full of people who encountered transformative discoveries but resisted them.

Many inventors were not the first to imagine an idea; they were among the first to commit themselves to developing and applying it despite uncertainty.

The paradox of innovation

Innovation often unfolds like this:

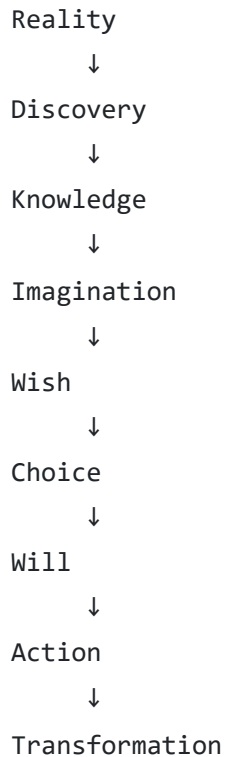


This suggests a refinement of your original idea.

Rather than saying:

Wish is the anterior to will.

A broader sequence might be:



In this view, **wish is not the beginning of everything**. Discovery and knowledge often come first. We cannot genuinely wish for possibilities we cannot even conceive. Yet once new possibilities become visible, wishes emerge, and from those wishes, the will can choose, commit, and reshape the world. This perspective reconciles your caveman, bridge, and AI examples: each major advance first expanded human understanding, and only then expanded the horizon of what people could meaningfully desire and pursue.