CHOICE & ACTION

Will Without Violence

About 10 minutes with one ordinary task or intention

This workbook offers a gentle introduction to the practice for you to explore on your own; deeper work is best undertaken with the support of a professional counsellor.

Find a way to act without turning against yourself

When something matters, you may try to make yourself do it through criticism, pressure or demands. This practice explores a more considered way to bring effort and choice together.

Will, here, means your capacity to choose and direct an action. Effort can be part of that. The question is how to support the action while taking your needs and circumstances seriously.

1. Choose a manageable task

Think of one ordinary intention you are approaching with pressure. Perhaps you want to prepare something, complete a small task or make time for an interest. Ask: "Does this still matter to me, and why?"

2. Notice how you are urging yourself on

What do you say to yourself about doing it? You might notice "I should have finished already" or "I cannot stop until it is done." Describe the effect of that pressure. You can leave the exact words unwritten if repeating them is unhelpful.

3. Include what the task asks of you

Consider the time, energy, information and support it needs. What is available today? Notice any reluctance or competing need without deciding that it must be overcome. It may be pointing to a practical limit, uncertainty or something you do not yet understand.

4. Choose a firm but fair approach

What would help you act with some willingness? You might clarify the task, reduce its scope, get help or set a stopping point. A fair commitment can still require effort, and you can revise it when circumstances change.

5. Try it and take stock

If now is workable, try the approach you have chosen. Notice both what you do and how you treat yourself while doing it. Afterwards, consider what helped and what needs changing. Rest, postponement or a different intention may be the appropriate choice.

Choose an ordinary, low-stakes task. Physical pain, exhaustion or distress are reasons to reconsider what you are asking of yourself, not tests you need to pass.

WILL WITHOUT VIOLENCE

Make effort more workable

What I want to do, why it matters, and the pressure I notice:

What the task needs, and what I realistically have available:

A firm but fair approach I could try, and what I notice if I do:

An ordinary example

You want to sort some paperwork and tell yourself you must finish the whole pile tonight. Looking at the time and your energy, you choose one small section and a stopping point. You can take the task seriously while allowing the rest to wait.

> A workable approach is specific enough to try. "Be kinder to myself" might become "work on this section for ten minutes, then stop and reconsider."

WILL WITHOUT VIOLENCE

Returning to the practice

Over four weeks

If this practice is part of your Development Map plan, follow the pace suggested there. Use a manageable intention rather than trying to change your whole way of working.

Week 1 | Recognise the pressure

Notice how you urge yourself towards one task and what effect it has. Include the times when effort already feels chosen and proportionate.

Week 2 | Consider what supports willingness

Look at the conditions around the task. What would make it clearer, more manageable or better supported? A practical change may matter as much as a change in self-talk.

Week 3 | Try a fair commitment

Choose a specific approach and a point for review. Try it if the circumstances fit. Notice whether you can remain responsive to your needs while making an effort.

Week 4 | Keep what is workable

What helped you direct action without unnecessary self-pressure? What remained difficult? Decide which conditions or words you want to carry forward.

What helps me combine commitment with care for myself?

This practice supports self-reflection. It is not a treatment or a substitute for professional support.

Work with me

If this workbook has opened up something you would like to explore further, you are welcome to get in touch. I offer psychotherapy and counselling in Dalston, East London, and online. We can use an initial session to consider what brings you to therapy and whether working together feels right for you.

BOOK AN INITIAL SESSION	CONTACT ME