

Living Objects — Product Vision (v2)

A small blank figure you raise. It travels with you, remembers the moments you share, and slowly grows a personality and a voice all its own.

Pairs with the concept board (`concept3.png`). This document is the readable, human-facing vision; the working decision log lives in `living_objects_design_decisions.md`, and the persona data in `species_deck.json`.

1. The idea in one breath

Every figure begins life as a blank white character with nothing but a code where its face should be. You name it, and from then on it's yours to raise. Every time you photograph it somewhere and leave a note, that moment becomes part of its life — and the figure *responds*, in a voice that's distinctly its own. Over months and years it accumulates a history, develops a personality, and becomes something no one else has: a little traveler with a lived experience.

The thesis: the object isn't valuable because of what it is. It becomes valuable because of where it's been, who it became, and the moments entrusted to it.

Most digital products compete for your attention. Living Objects does the opposite — it quietly collects your *moments*, and gives you a small companion that grows because of them.

2. What makes it different

- **You raise it; you don't just own it.** It's a companion, closer to a pet or a childhood toy than a souvenir. The bond is in caring for it and watching it become itself.
 - **Every figure is a genuinely different creature.** Two figures that visit the same place will say completely different things, because each is born with its own nature. No two are alike — not because they were manufactured differently, but because no one else lived their life, and no two were born the same.
 - **It responds in its own voice.** Not a chatbot that answers questions — a small being that reflects on its own life, grounded only in what it has actually lived.
 - **It's alive, with real stakes.** It can be delighted, restless, wistful. Neglected long enough, it quietly fades — and a single new moment wakes it again.
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3. How it works

1. **Meet your figure.** Each one is born with a unique identity and a personality of its own.
2. **Name it.** You give it a name and set a secret word — now you're its *keyholder*.
3. **Share a moment.** Photograph it where you are, and leave a short note.
4. **It responds.** After a beat — as if it's taking the moment in — it reacts in its own voice, shaped by who it is. The reflection is generated after the moment settles, so the page can stay fast while the background sweep does the work.
5. **It grows.** It remembers, its character deepens, and it even tells you where it wants to go next.

Anyone can *scan* a figure and read its life — no app, no account, instantly in a browser. But *adding* to its story is reserved for its keyholder, so the figure you raise stays truly yours.

4. The figure (the physical object)

A one-piece, free-standing figure designed to be carried, photographed, and loved for years.

Height	90 mm (compact, pocket-sized)
Form	Oversized rounded head, pear-shaped body, short arms, sturdy stance for outdoor surfaces
Finish	Matte, warm-white, smooth and tactile; soft radiused edges to survive travel
Features	Completely blank — no eyes, mouth, clothing, or seams. A pure canvas.
The face	A durable QR code laser-etched/UV-printed where a face would be, with a human-readable ID (e.g. MF7X2).

Why the code is the face: it's the figure's identity *and* a clever piece of design — you can't frame and photograph the figure without its face being in the shot, which keeps every memory honestly *of this figure*. (It also doubles as a future AR marker.) The body stays blank on purpose: the figure is identical to every other one until life makes it unique.

5. Its personality — the Species system

Every figure is **born with a Species and a nature**. The Species is a named, collectible archetype (there are 15+); the nature is a handful of inner dials plus one **core hunger** — the thing the creature most wants from the world.

The five dials, lightly: how it *sees* (concrete vs. dreamlike), how it *speaks* (poetic vs. clear-eyed), where it draws *energy* (solitude vs. people), its *warmth* (earnest vs. wry), and its *nerve* (cautious vs. bold). Its **hunger** is one of seven drives — Wonder, Belonging, Understanding, Freedom, Meaning, Delight, or Peace — and it colors everything the figure says.

A few of the creatures, reacting to the *same* misty mountaintop:

-  **The Wide-Eyed Wanderer** (*hunger: Wonder*) — "The whole world dropped away into cloud. I could fall off the edge of everything and I'd say yes — where next?"
-  **The Worrier** (*hunger: Peace*) — "It's a long way down and I couldn't see the path. But your hands were warm and the wind finally stopped. Can we stay a moment before we go?"
-  **The Old Soul** (*hunger: Meaning*) — "Mountains were here long before me and will outlast me. To stand on one for a breath is enough; I don't need to conquer it."
-  **The Scientist** (*hunger: Understanding*) — "Hypothesis: this fog burns off by mid-morning. The cold gets into the seams. Noted — and, oddly, I like it."

You discover your figure's personality; you don't pick it. Unboxing is a reveal — a little of the joy of "who did I get?" — and there are no rerolls. The one you got is yours, quirks and all. Over a long life its nature can even drift, so a timid figure that's crossed the world may slowly grow braver.

6. Its voice — the living character

The figure is an observer and a historian of its own little life, not a general assistant. It has two ways of speaking:

- Its chronicle** — short reflections it writes about the moments you share. These are permanent,

grounded only in what it has truly lived, and written in its own voice. It never invents places it hasn't been, and it's allowed to wonder, to be uncertain, to leave gaps.

- **A light conversation** (*the next thing being built*) — you can ask it things, and it answers in character, from its own memories. These chats are playful and fleeting; they're never written into its permanent history.

Because each figure speaks from its **hunger**, its voice is never generic. A Wanderer narrates the world like a breathless first-time traveler; the Old Soul like a quiet oracle. And it can **want things** — it expresses where it wishes to go next, and when you take it there, that wish becomes a real memory. You're not collecting a toy; you're raising a small co-author who wants things.

7. Aliveness over time

- **It remembers.** Its timeline is its life; it can connect a new moment to an old one.
 - **It changes.** Its character deepens with experience.
 - **It can fade.** Left alone for a long while, it doesn't guilt-trip or "die" — it grows quiet and dim, almost an object again. A single real, fitting moment wakes it back up. Re-engaging is the delight of rousing a sleeping creature, never the relief of escaping guilt.
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8. Ownership, trust & privacy

- **The figure owns its own identity.** You are its keeper, not its owner — if it's ever passed to someone else, its life simply continues.
 - **Open to read, yours to write.** Anyone can scan and read a figure's story with zero friction. Adding to it requires the figure's secret word, so the figure you raise can't be overwritten by strangers.
 - **Authentic by design.** Memories are captured live, with the figure in frame — its history reflects where it has actually been.
 - **Privacy by default.** No names, profiles, or tracking. We keep only the *texture* of a moment — the place (kept coarse), the time, the light — as the creature's senses, never anyone's identity.
 - **Honest about permanence.** A moment locks shortly after it's made and becomes a settled part of the figure's history; it's permanent in spirit, though we can always remove something on request.
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9. Where it is today

Living Objects is past concept. There's a **working alpha, live on Cloudflare**, and the whole core loop has been raised with real figures (including *Pebble*, a painted rock standing in as Figure Zero). This alpha exists to answer the only question that matters first: *do people truly bond with a small object that remembers?*

Live and proven today

- **Birth.** Each figure is rolled with its own Species, nature (the five dials + a hunger), and quirks, and writes its first line of life — its *Moment Zero*. Blind-box; no rerolls.
- **Meet your kind.** Alongside Moment Zero, it gets a short card explaining its kind, its hunger, and what makes it tender — written *about* it, in plain language, for the person about to raise it (the figure's own voice never explains itself this way; this is a different document, for a different reader).
- **Scan to read.** Anyone can open a figure's page in a browser and read its life — no app, no account.

- **Naming / claim.** The first keeper names it and sets a secret word, becoming its keyholder (remembered per device, so it isn't re-asked every time).
- **Sharing a moment.** Live camera capture with the figure in frame, a short note, and a coarse sense of place — with clear upload feedback.
- **It sees, and it responds.** The figure actually *looks* at the photo from its own low vantage, then after a beat reflects on the moment in its own voice — grounded only in what it has lived, and carrying motifs and earlier moments forward across its timeline.
- **Wishes.** It occasionally voices somewhere it wishes to go; take it there and the wish becomes a real memory. Gentle, never nagging; an ignored wish quietly fades.

Next

- **Light conversation.** Ask the figure a question and get an in-character answer drawn from its own memories — playful, fleeting, never written into its permanent history.
- **More figures, more keepers.** 3D-print a small batch and live with them alongside a few trusted people. This is the real test of the bond.

Deliberately deferred — until the core magic is proven

- Public sharing and discovery; safety moderation at scale; following figures.
- Dial-drift over a long life, and the *automatic* fading transition (its visual language is already in place); richer hardware (NFC tap-verify, the face-code as an AR marker).
- Multi-keeper handoff, formal data-erasure flows, and the business model.

Guiding principles (unchanged)

1. **Physical first.** The figure is the anchor of value; the digital layer exists only to deepen it.
2. **Almost no friction.** Reading is instant and universal; raising it is one gentle step.
3. **Privacy by default.** We track the *object's* life, never the user's identity.
4. **Incremental vitality.** Every choice must pass one test: *does this make the little object feel more alive?*