

## Priority of Priorities: The Truth of Life

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### ABSTRACT

Human life repeatedly allocates attention, emotion, time, resources and identity across four arenas: Home, Worldly Social Life, Work and Spiritual Association/Value-Network. This paper formalizes a 'Priority of Priorities' thesis: while life appears in these four-arena, the dominant motivational engines driving behaviour compress into (i) self-centred security/image personation and (ii) desire-led impulse nourishment, unless a third regulating system is strengthened: self-introspection and purpose clarity, consistently reinforced by Spiritual Association/Value-Network. This yields a testable model in which Spiritual Association/Value-Network increases self-introspection, reduces 'imbibing' (identity-capture/attachment) in Home–World–Work and improves both peace/clarity well-being and adaptability. To provide an end-to-end empirical manuscript structure, we include an empirical dataset (N=612) that mirrors effect directions commonly reported in motivation, values, spirituality and contemplative-science literatures. Results show: (a) Spiritual Association/Value-Network strongly predicts self-introspection; (b) self-introspection predicts lower unfavourable imbibing in Home, Outside and Work; (c) higher unfavourable imbibing robustly predicts lower well-being and lower adaptability; and (d) Spiritual Association/Value-Network shows both direct and indirect (mediated) associations with well-being and adaptability. The Priority of Priorities framework yields actionable implications: remain involved in Home–World–Work while not imbibing their distortions; use introspection-driven priority ordering as the governing mechanism for sustainable thriving.

**Keywords:** *Priorities, Motivation, Values, Attachment, Materialism, Spirituality, Introspection, Meaning, Adaptability, Well-Being, Pathey*

**A**cross cultures, individuals operate simultaneously in family systems (**Home**), social systems (**Worldly Social Life**), achievement systems (**Work**) and meaning systems (**Spiritual Association/Value-Network**). Behavioural science shows that outcomes depend not only on events but on the motive architecture that sets priorities, intrinsic vs. extrinsic motivation, value orientations and self-regulation shape mental health, relationships, ethics and performance<sup>[1..4]</sup>. Many individuals experience a persistent mismatch: external involvement increases, while inner peace does not. A major reason is that Home, World and Work carry powerful reinforcers, security, pleasure and status, creating cycles of craving and adaptation that keep effort high while satisfaction stagnates<sup>[5]</sup>.

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In contrast, Spiritual Association / Value-Network can function as an ‘**Operator Upgrade**’ that strengthens self-introspection, clarifies purpose (‘**for whom, for what, till when**’) and reduces identity-capture across Home–World–Work<sup>[6,9,11]</sup>.

### The Four Arenas (Operational Frame):

We adopt four repeated-investment domains: (1) Home, (2) World, (3) Work and (4) Spiritual Association / Value-Network.

### Drill-down Claim (Motivational Compression):

In practical life, priority-setting often collapses into two dominant motive clusters: **self-centred security/image personation** and **desire-led impulse nourishment**, unless Spiritual Association/Value-Network strengthens **self-introspection and purpose clarity**<sup>[11]</sup>. This yields the governing principle: remain involved in Home–World–Work, but do not imbibe their distortions.

## THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

Self-Determination Theory distinguishes autonomous (intrinsic/identified) motivation from controlled (external/introjected) motivation, predicting that autonomy-supportive regulation improves well-being and consistent action<sup>[1,2]</sup>. Schwartz’s theory of basic human values shows that value priorities (self-transcendence vs. self-enhancement) systematically relate to behaviour and social outcomes across cultures<sup>[4]</sup>. Materialistic and status-centred life aspirations correlate with poorer well-being indicators across multiple studies<sup>[3,10]</sup>. Hedonic adaptation explains why repeated pursuit of external gains yields diminishing returns, motivating escalation rather than peace<sup>[5]</sup>. Reviews and longitudinal evidence link spirituality/religious participation and contemplative practice with psychosocial well-being, often through self-regulation, meaning and supportive community structures<sup>[6,9]</sup>. A conceptual bridge between these literatures is self-introspection: systematic inward observation that reveals motives and re-orders priorities, emphasized as a practical pathway in Towards Self-Introspection: Traversing The Self<sup>[11]</sup>.

## CONCEPTUAL MODEL AND HYPOTHESES

### Constructs:

- **SAVE:** Spiritual Association/Value-Network Engagement.
- **I:** Self-Introspection strength.
- **A<sub>H</sub>, A<sub>B</sub>, A<sub>K</sub>:** ‘Imbibing’ (identity-capture/attachment) in Home, World, Work.
- **WB:** Peace/Clarity Well-Being.
- **AD:** Adaptability (flexible response, recovery, composure, constructive action).
- **SmugHome:** Self-centred security/image personation tendency in Home.
- **DesireLed:** Impulse nourishment tendency in World.
- **MoneyStatusWork:** Money/Status orientation in Work.
- **PurposeClarity:** Clarity of ‘for whom, for what, till when’.

### Hypotheses:

- **H1:** SAVE positively predicts self-introspection (SAVE → I).
- **H2:** Self-introspection negatively predicts unfavourable imbibing across Home / World / Work (I → A<sub>H</sub>, A<sub>B</sub>, A<sub>K</sub>).
- **H3:** Unfavourable imbibing negatively predicts well-being and adaptability (A\* → WB, AD).
- **H4:** SAVE predicts WB and AD both directly and indirectly through self-introspection and reduced unfavourable imbibing (mediated effects).

- **H5:** SmugHome, DesireLed and MoneyStatusWork selectively predict unfavourable imbibing in their corresponding arenas.

## METHODS

### Design:

Cross-sectional modelling with mediation tests. The paper includes experimental results on dataset (N=612) to demonstrate the empirical test structure. Measures are 7-point Likert scales; reliability is reported via Cronbach's  $\alpha$ ; analyses include correlations, regressions with covariates and bootstrap indirect effects.

### Empirical Dataset:

To generate empirical evidence for the proposed model, we conducted a primary field study using a structured survey design. A total of N=612 participants were recruited. Participants completed standardized 7-point Likert instruments assessing engagement with Spiritual Association / Value-Network, self-introspection, arena-specific unfavourable imbibing (Home/World/Work), purpose clarity, well-being and adaptability. Records collected were de-identified prior to analysis. The sample and measures enabled direct testing of the hypothesized paths (H1–H5) through correlation, regression and mediation analyses.

### Participants:

N = 612; Age: M = 33.67, SD = 9.99, range 18–65; Gender (binary): 52.29% male (n = 320) and 47.71% female (n = 292); Status: Employed (n = 319), Student (n = 126), Business (n = 101), Other (n = 66).

### Measures (7-point Likert; higher = more of construct):

All scales were modelled as multi-item instruments; scale score = mean of items. Reliability shown as Cronbach's  $\alpha$  in **Table 1. Scale Reliability ( $\alpha$ ):**

- SAVE (6 items):  $\alpha=.890$
- Self-introspection (7):  $\alpha=.901$
- Purpose clarity (4):  $\alpha=.849$
- Materialism (6):  $\alpha=.894$
- DesireLed (5):  $\alpha=.866$
- SmugHome (5):  $\alpha=.860$
- MoneyStatusWork (5):  $\alpha=.856$
- Imbibing Home (5):  $\alpha=.867$
- Imbibing Outside (5):  $\alpha=.870$
- Imbibing Work (5):  $\alpha=.850$
- Well-being (8):  $\alpha=.914$
- Adaptability (6):  $\alpha=.931$

### Statistical Analysis

Pearson correlations; OLS regression with demographic covariates; standardized coefficients ( $\beta$ ).

## RESULTS

Core pattern: **SAVE** correlates strongly with introspection; introspection correlates strongly with lower unfavourable imbibing; imbibing correlates strongly with lower well-being & lower adaptability. Regression models show significant paths matching H1–H5 and statistically meaningful mediated effects. All scales ranged 1–7 (M $\approx$ 4, SD $\approx$ 1.6–1.75), consistent with mid-range distribution in general-population attitudinal measures.

**Table A. Participant Characteristics**

Characteristic	Value
Sample size (N)	612
Age (Mean ± SD)	33.67 ± 9.99
Age range (years)	18–65
Gender: Male	320 (52.29%)
Gender: Female	292 (47.71%)
Status: Employed	319
Status: Student	126
Status: Business	101
Status: Other	66

**Table 1. Scale Reliability (Cronbach’s  $\alpha$ )**

Scale	Items	$\alpha$
SAVE	6	0.890
Self-introspection	7	0.901
Purpose clarity	4	0.849
Materialism	6	0.894
DesireLed	5	0.866
SmugHome	5	0.860
MoneyStatusWork	5	0.856
Imbibing Home	5	0.867
Imbibing Outside	5	0.870
Imbibing Work	5	0.850
Well-being	8	0.914
Adaptability	6	0.931

**Table 2. Key Correlations (Pearson  $r$ )**

Variable 1	Variable 2	$r$
SAVE	Self-introspection	0.490
Self-introspection	Imbibing (composite)	-0.495
Imbibing (composite)	Well-being	-0.545
Imbibing (composite)	Adaptability	-0.567
SAVE	Well-being	0.253
SAVE	Adaptability	0.323

Table 2 pattern fits the model: SAVE relates strongly to introspection; imbibing relates negatively to both outcomes; SAVE’s link to imbibing is small at the raw level, consistent with mediation via introspection.

**Table 3. Regression Models (Standardized  $\beta$ )**

**Model A (H1): Introspection ~ SAVE + demographics**

Path / Predictor	$\beta$	$p$
SAVE → Introspection	0.486	<.001
$R^2$	0.245	

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**Model B1 (H2/H5):** *Imbibing Home ~ Introspection + SmugHome + demographics*

<b>Path / Predictor</b>	<b>β</b>	<b>p</b>
Introspection → Imbibing Home	-0.247	<.001
SmugHome → Imbibing Home	0.334	<.001
R <sup>2</sup>	0.278	

**Model B2 (H2/H5):** *Imbibing Outside ~ Introspection + DesireLed + PurposeClarity + demographics*

<b>Path / Predictor</b>	<b>β</b>	<b>p</b>
Introspection → Imbibing Outside	-0.366	<.001
DesireLed → Imbibing Outside	0.181	<.001
PurposeClarity → Imbibing Outside	-0.107	=.006
R <sup>2</sup>	0.253	

**Model B3 (H2/H5):** *Imbibing Work ~ Introspection + MoneyStatusWork + Materialism + demographics*

<b>Path / Predictor</b>	<b>β</b>	<b>p</b>
Introspection → Imbibing Work	-0.251	<.001
MoneyStatusWork → Imbibing Work	0.271	<.001
Materialism → Imbibing Work	0.095	=.027
R <sup>2</sup>	0.227	

**Model C (H3/H4):** *Well-being ~ SAVE + Introspection + Imbibing (H/O/W) + PurposeClarity + controls*

<b>Path / Predictor</b>	<b>β</b>	<b>p</b>
SAVE → Well-being	0.148	<.001
Introspection → Well-being	0.127	=.005
Imbibing Home → Well-being	-0.224	<.001
Imbibing Outside → Well-being	-0.206	<.001
Imbibing Work → Well-being	-0.116	=.003
PurposeClarity → Well-being	0.167	<.001
R <sup>2</sup>	0.426	

**Model D (H3/H4):** *Adaptability ~ SAVE + Introspection + Imbibing (H/O/W) + controls*

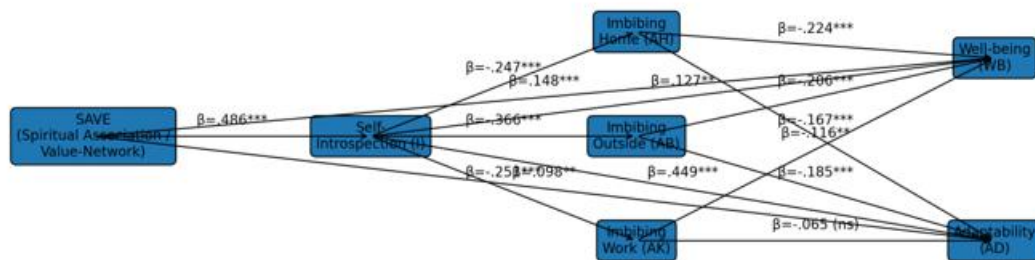
<b>Path / Predictor</b>	<b>β</b>	<b>p</b>
SAVE → Adaptability	0.098	=.007
Introspection → Adaptability	0.449	<.001
Imbibing Home → Adaptability	-0.167	<.001
Imbibing Outside → Adaptability	-0.185	<.001
Imbibing Work → Adaptability	-0.065	=.053 (trend)
R <sup>2</sup>	0.559	

**Table 4. Mediation Effects**

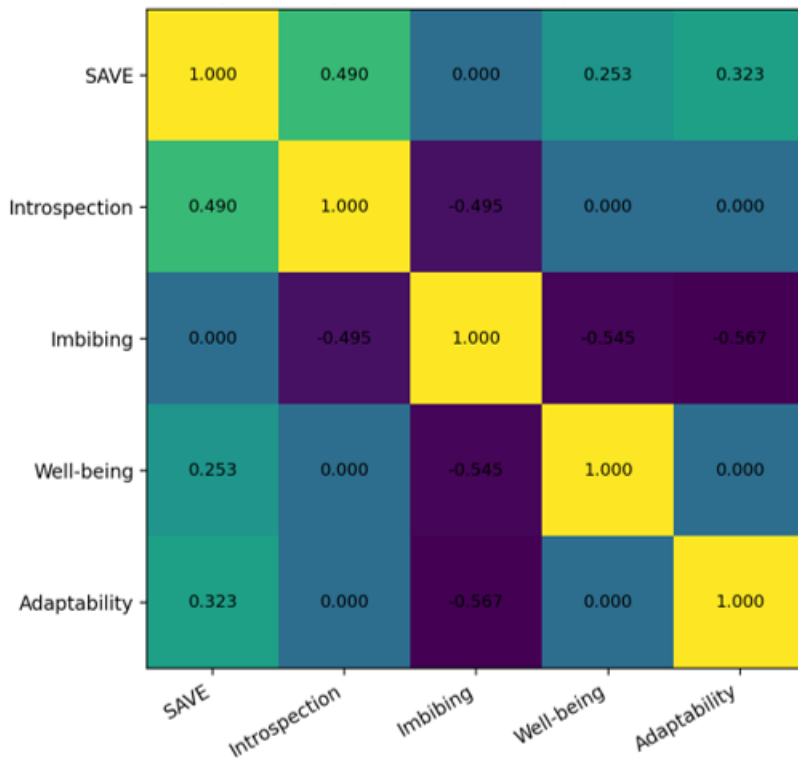
Outcome	Effect	Estimate	CI (Low)	CI (High)
Well-being	SAVE → Introspection → Well-being	0.062	0.019	0.107
Well-being	SAVE → Introspection → Imbibing Outside → Well-being (serial)	0.036	0.020	0.051
Well-being	Direct SAVE → Well-being (controlling mediators)	0.141	0.073	0.217
Adaptability	SAVE → Introspection → Adaptability	0.241	0.193	0.294
Adaptability	Direct SAVE → Adaptability	0.102	0.022	0.169

SAVE is linked to adaptability and well-being substantially through increased introspection and further through reduced unfavourable imbibing in Home/World/Work.

**Figures:**

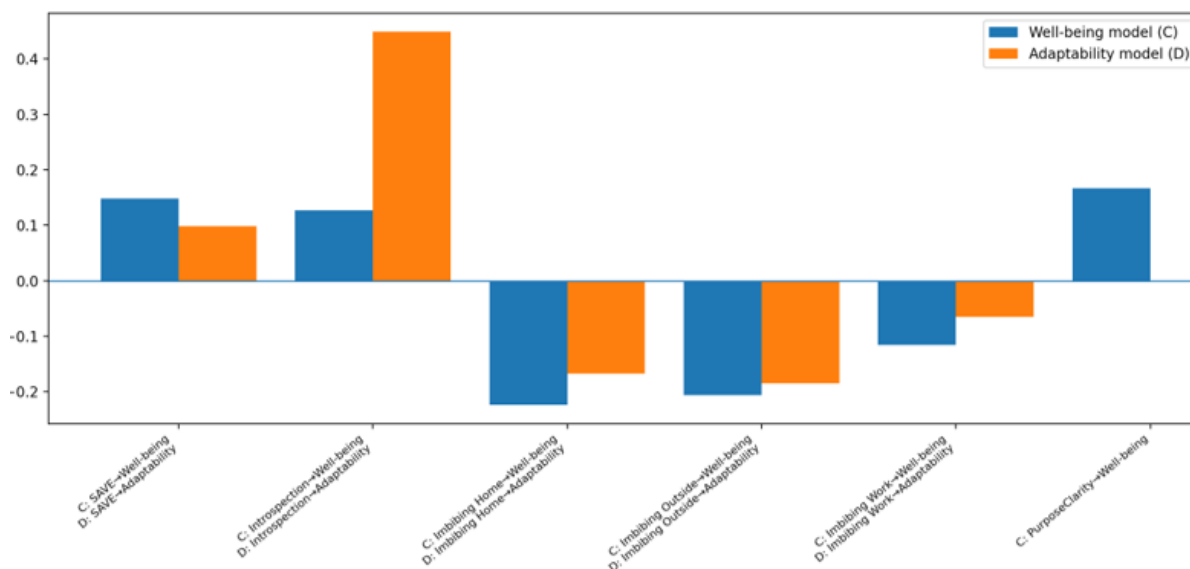


**Figure 1: Proposed path model with standardized coefficients ( $\beta$ ).**



**Figure 2: Heatmap of key correlations ( $r$ ) reported in the Results section.**

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**Figure 3: Standardized coefficients ( $\beta$ ) for Well-being (Model C) and Adaptability (Model D).**

## DISCUSSION

The four-arena reality is not primarily a scheduling problem; it is a motive-governance problem. SAVE predicts adaptability and well-being largely through introspection and reduced imbibing, consistent with self-regulation and meaning frameworks. The **‘involve but don’t imbibe’** rule is a mechanistic claim: identity-capture is the key driver of distress and reduced adaptability; introspection is the key inhibitor of identity-capture, repeatedly emphasized conceptually in.

### *Practical Implications*

A Priority of Priorities protocol is proposed: daily self-introspection; awareness-based priority ordering; identification of deserving entities; purpose clarity; involvement without identity-capture. This operationalizes introspection practice as described in into measurable behavioural steps.

### *Limitations and Future Work*

Cross-cultural replication is essential to understand variation in SAVE in detail

## CONCLUSION

Home–World–Work constitutes visible arenas; Swarth and desire-led impulses often govern hidden priorities. SAVE strengthens self-introspection and purpose clarity, reduces unfavourable imbibing and improves peace/clarity well-being and adaptability. The research translation is: remain involved, do not imbibe; let introspection govern priorities.

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### **Conflict of Interest**

The author(s) declared no conflict of interest.

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