

# **Self-inferred desires to benefit self and other**

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## **Abstract**

Self-inferences have crucial implications for not only how people see themselves, but also how they interact with the social world. Little work, however, has explored the inferences people draw about their own desires. Here, we investigate these inferences. Participants (N=71) made a series of choices to either financially benefit themselves or a charity. During and after these choices, participants reported the relative strength of their desires, and reported their confidence in these inferences. Crucially, we compared these self-inferences against a formal model which estimated the relative strength of participants desires based on their actual choices. Participants expressed high confidence in their inferred desires, and their self-inferences tracked with choice-based model estimates of their desires. We highlight potential cognitive mechanisms underlying this relationship, as well as their implications for peoples capacity for self-knowledge.