

social sharing of emotion and emotional regulation



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the social sharing of emotion...

in current life, after an emotion...

- people talk about it, recurrently
- to people around them (intimates)
- in the next hours, days, weeks...
- in 80 to 100% of episodes
- irrespective of
 - emotional valence,
 - gender,
 - education,
 - culture...

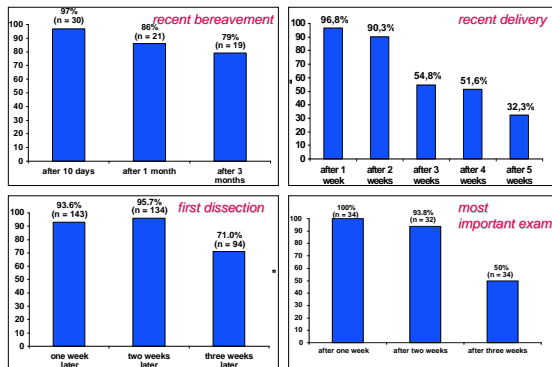


- the more intense the emotion,
the more it will be shared

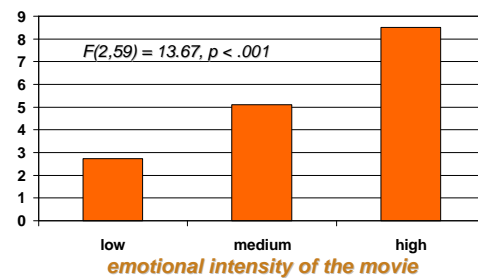
for a review, see Rimé (2009, in "Emotion Review")

social sharing of emotion after emotional life events

(source: Rimé, Finkenauer, Luminet, Zech & Philippot, Eur Rev Soc Psych, 1998)



movie induction of emotion in the lab. → extent of social sharing in the next 2 days



(Luminet, Bouts, Delie, Manstead, & Rimé, Cognition & Emotion, 2000)

social sharing of emotion:

why do people want
to share their emotions ...?

why do people want to share their emotions? ...

positive emotions?

- Langston (1994)
 - "capitalization"
 - enhances the sender's level of positive affects
- Gable et al. (2004)
 - confirmed "capitalization"
 - demonstrated that when partners are responsive, the quality of the relationship is enhanced (intimacy; satisfaction...)



negative emotions...?

why do people share negative emotions?...

stereotypical answer :

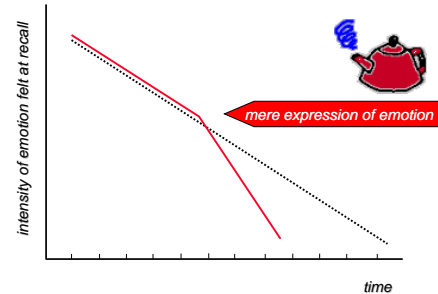
"talking about an emotion would bring emotional recovery..."

- catharsis
- discharge
- relief



→ prediction:
"once it is shared, the emotion vanishes..."

prediction... "merely expressing an emotion brings emotional recovery"...



effects of merely sharing a negative emotion...

- **episodes which were kept secret**
(Finkenauer & Rimé, J. Soc Clin Psy., 1998)
 - same emotional impact as shared episodes
- **naturally developed sharing**
(Rimé, et al., Eur. Rev. Soc. Psychol., 1998)
 - no relation with emotional recovery
- **laboratory-induced sharing**
(Zech & Rimé, J Clin Psychol Psychother, 2005)
 - no impact upon emotional recovery
 - but...



effects of sharing an emotion:

data from experimental studies

- **...but, participants reported important social benefits... :**
 - they felt supported
 - they felt understood
 - they felt close to the listener
 - their well-being was enhanced...

Zech & Rimé (Clin. Psychol. & Psychother., 2005)

effects of sharing an emotion: to sum up...

- sharing an emotion does not bring emotional recovery...
- but it brings important social benefits ...

→ similar findings in other areas...



psychological debriefings of victims after traumatic events...

- **in recent years,**
 - widespread practice
- **expected effects**
 - prevention of PTSD
 - fits common sense
 - expression → recovery
- **meta-analytic reviews of studies**
 - PTSD prevention → null effects
 - even some "a contrario effects"
- but...



benefits of psychological debriefings:



- ...but, participants reported important social benefits
- managers → symbolic social functions
 - society is represented
 - listening, understanding, support
 - validation of an "unbelievable" experience
 - social integration of victims
- peers → initiation of a social process
 - mutual listening
 - mutual support
 - reciprocal empathy
 - "we feel the same" → "honey moon" effect

in sum, quite consistently...



- mere emotional expression in interpersonal context...
 - no emotional recovery
 - but, benefits for social variables

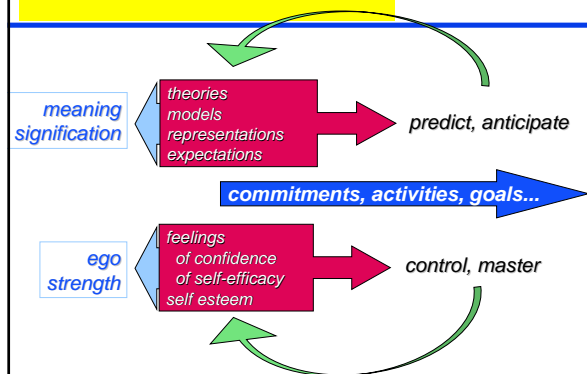


...where do the benefits come from?
...how to achieve emotional recovery?

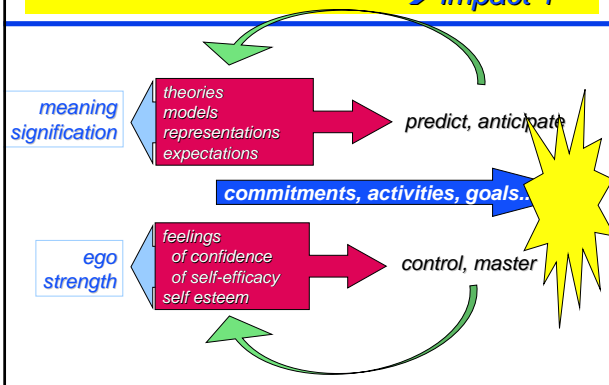
...where do the benefits come from?
...how to achieve emotional recovery?

→ a closer look at
the impact of an emotion...

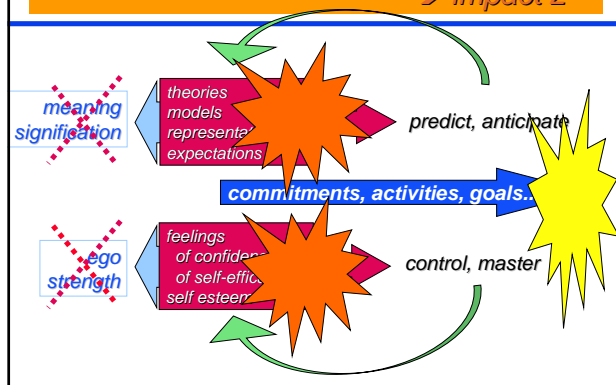
what we do in current life...

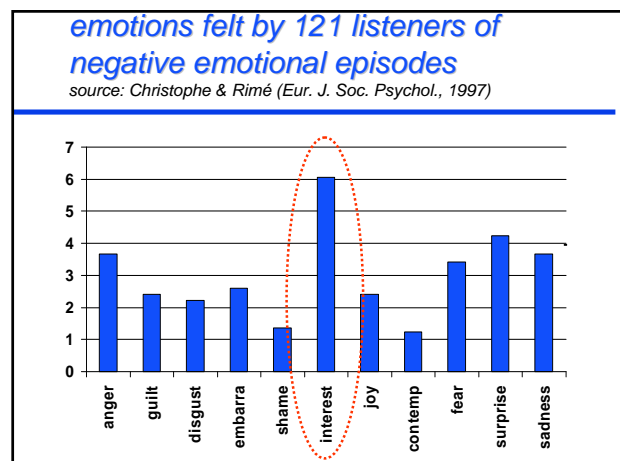
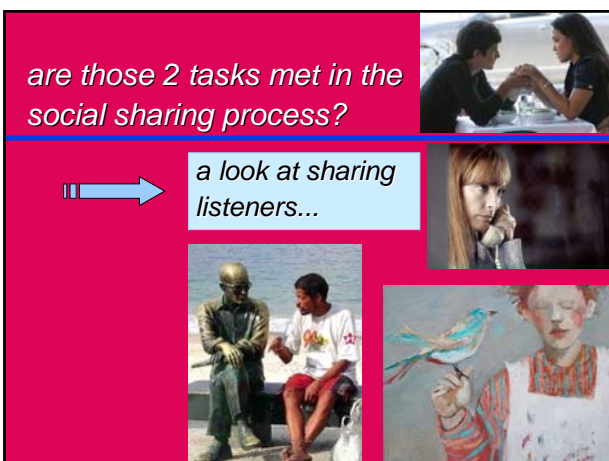
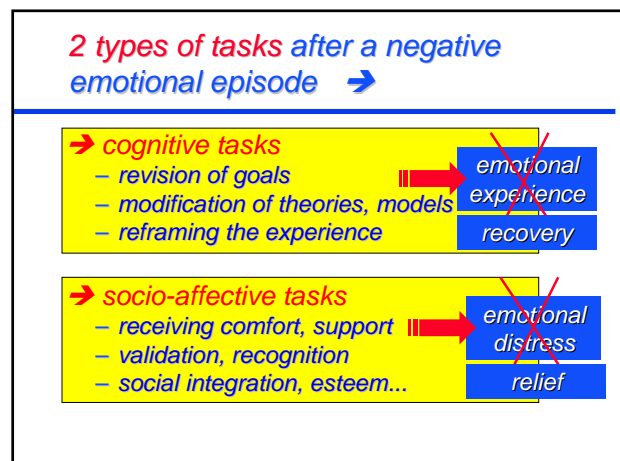
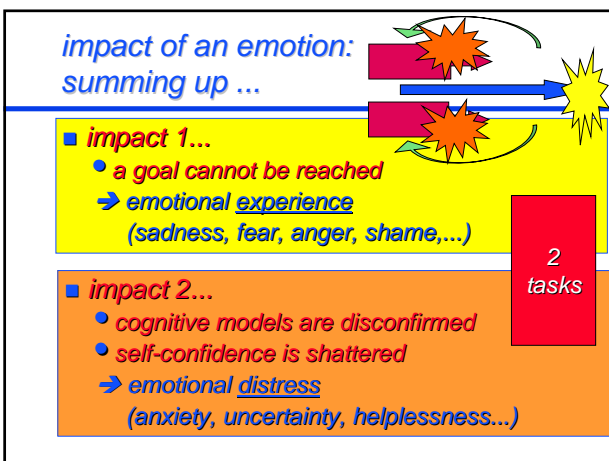
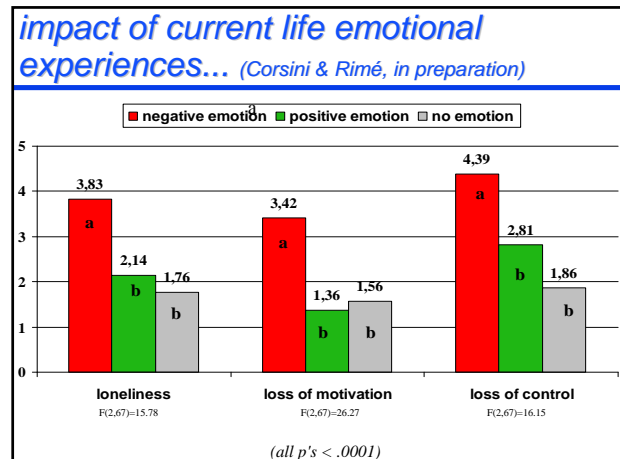
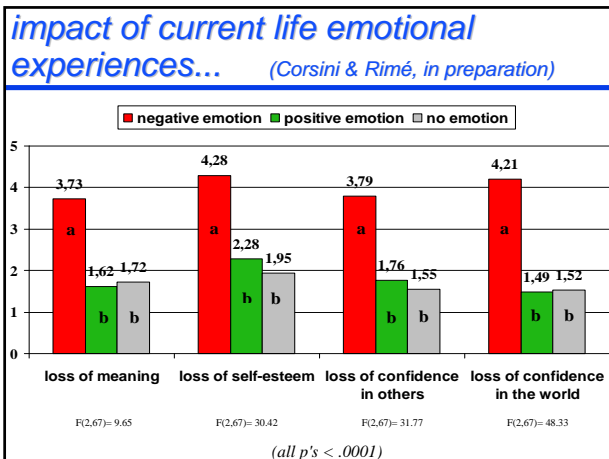


negative emotional episode ...
→ impact 1



negative emotional experience ...
→ impact 2



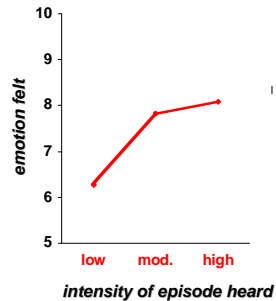


exposure to the sharing of an emotion elicits emotion

source: Christophe & Rimé (1997)

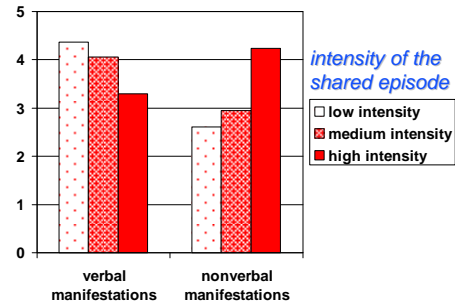
listeners...

- heard either
 - a low or
 - a moderate
 - or a high intensity emotional episode
- rated (0 to 10) the intensity of the emotion they felt while listening

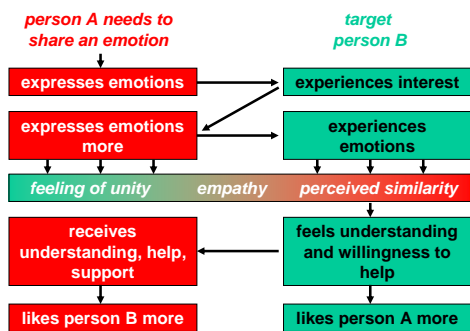


listener's responses as a function of the intensity of the shared emotion

source: Christophe & Rimé (Eur. J. Soc. Psychol., 1997)

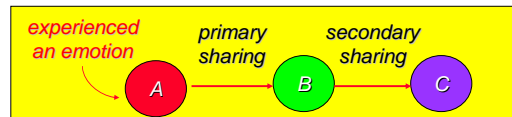


interpersonal dynamic of the social sharing of emotion



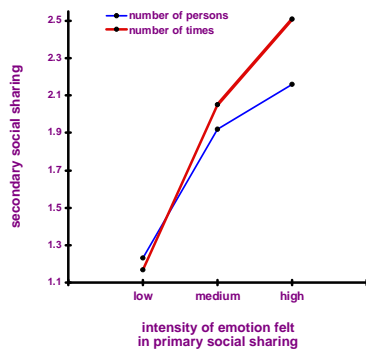
“secondary social sharing”...

- if emotions are socially shared,
- and if targets experience emotions when listening,
- then, targets should share what they heard with third persons...

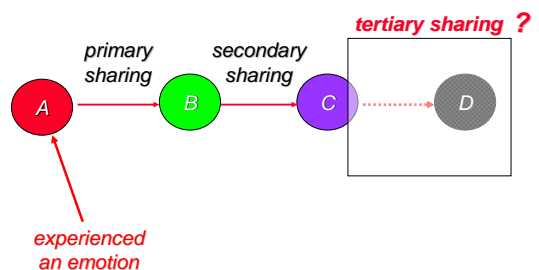


secondary social sharing

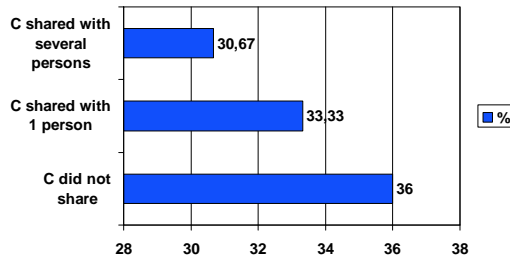
(source: Christophe & Rimé, Eur. J. Soc. Psychol., 1997)



is there evidence of tertiary social sharing?

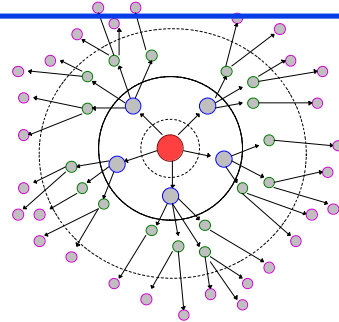


person C heard about A from B...
did person C tell it to a D?



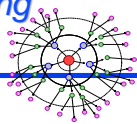
(source: Christophe, 1997)

collective dynamic resulting from the sharing of emotion...



from Rimé (2005)

benefits of the social sharing
and its diffusion...



- **for the initiator...**
 - social recognition, validation, support
 - people around know what happened
- **for the community...**
 - the emotional information is distributed
 - the social knowledge is extended
 - social representations & models are updated
 - preventive actions can be undertaken
- **in sum, enhancement of...**
 - of contacts and exchanges
 - of closeness and social integration
 - of knowledge and models

tasks after an emotion...
completed in mere social sharing?

→ **cognitive tasks (emotional experience)**

- reorganisation of motives
- modification of models and world views
- reframing, reappraisal of experience

not completed
(no demand)

→ **socio-affective tasks (emotional distress)**

- receiving comfort, support, love
- validation, recognition
- social integration...

completed

how to achieve emotional recovery
after an emotion?

→ an other social sharing mode...?

Lepore, Fernandez-Berrocal, Ragan, &
Ramos (Anxiety, Stress & Coping, 2004)

- participants viewed an emotional movie
- then, assigned to
 - (1) a challenging confederate (reframing, reappraisal)
 - (2) a validating (supportive) confederate
 - (3) a talk alone condition
 - (4) a no talk condition
- compared to the no talk group, participants in the challenging condition alone evidenced a clear superior recovery
- "challenging" = a "cognitive work" condition

if targets (listeners) of a social sharing interaction adopt...

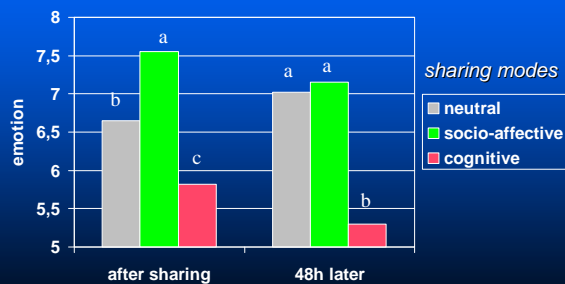
	socio-affective responding	cognitive responding
reduction of emotion?	no	yes
change in cognitions and motives?	no	yes
social support & social integration?	yes	no

experimental test...

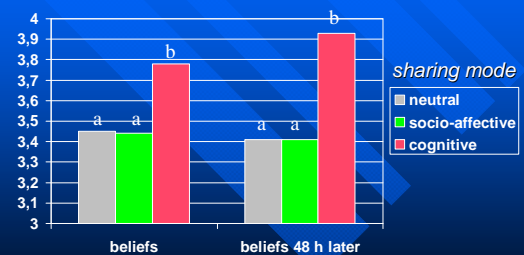
Nils & Rimé (submitted)

- induction of emotion using a movie clip
- then, social sharing with an "intimate" partner
- this partner was instructed to develop either
 - neutral sharing
 - empathetic sharing → socio-affective mode
 - positive reframing → cognitive mode
- measures
 - emotional impact of the movie
 - cognitive: *beliefs-world views*
 - social: *loneliness scale*
- measurement times
 - immediately after sharing
 - 48h later, after reexposure to movie

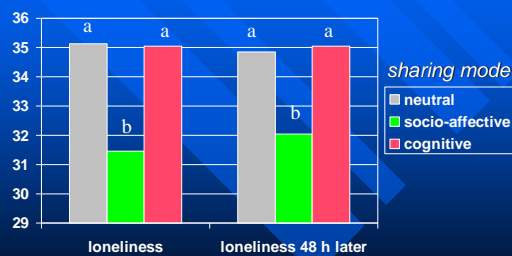
emotional impact of the movie...



cognitive effects : beliefs – world views...



social effects : loneliness scale...



conclusion...

→ 2 distinct social sharing modes

- each mode → specific effect
 - socio-affective mode
 - social integration
 - buffers the emotional distress (impact 2)
 - cognitive mode
 - cognitive integration
 - buffers the emotional experience (impact 1)

...thanks for your attention!



*for powerpoint presentation
and/or related papers...
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