**Supplemental Materials**

I Hear You (Not): Sharers’ Expressions and Listeners’ Inferences of the Need for Support in Response to Negative Emotions

by Pauw, Sauter, Van Kleef, & Fischer, 2018, Cognition & Emotion

Table of Contents

1. Supplemental Materials2

Supplement 1.1: Bogus Articles Used in Study 12

Supplement 1.2: Instructions Used in Study 15

Supplement 1.3: Coding Scheme Used in Study 18

Supplement 1.4: Stories Used in Study 211

Supplement 1.5: Stories Used in Study 314

2. Supplemental Analyses17

Supplement 2.1: Additional Measures and Analyses Study 117

Supplement 2.2: Additional Measures and Analyses Study 222

Supplement 2.3: Additional Measures and Analyses Study 327

3. Literature30

**1. Supplemental Materials**

**Supplement 1.1: Bogus Articles Used in Study 1**

In Study 1, participants were presented with an article advocating the use of socio-affective support, cognitive support, or mere sharing, depending on the assigned condition. Please note that these are translations of the articles, which were originally in Dutch. The articles were presented to participants in a realistic-looking newspaper article layout.

**Socio-affective support condition**

ROUGH PATCH? TALK ABOUT IT!

Comfort and empathy appear to be the best remedy against emotional distress.

Everyone is troubled by negative emotions like anger, sadness or disappointment every once in a while. Some people are better able to deal with these emotions than others. Talking about your negative emotions can bring relief, but if it works depends on how the other responds. Researchers of the University of Birmingham followed 200 people for a period of two months to study the effects of talking about one’s emotions. Two kinds of responses were distinguished: comfort and a dissenting opinion. Comfort was things like providing attention, validation and empathy. A dissenting opinion is when the listener offers a different perspective on the situation. The results of the study showed that emotional recovery was most instant when conversational partners provided comfort by listening carefully and showing empathy. The listener’s sympathy made the sharers feel connected and supported, and they therefore felt less upset. Providing comfort and empathy thus form an effective way to reduce negative emotions in others.

January 2016, by Derk Versteeghen

**Cognitive support condition**

ROUGH PATCH? TALK ABOUT IT!

A dissenting opinion appears to be the best remedy against emotional distress.

Everyone is troubled by negative emotions like anger, sadness or disappointment every once in a while. Some people are better able to deal with these emotions than others. Talking about your negative emotions can bring relief, but if it works depends on how the other responds. Researchers of the University of Birmingham followed 200 people for a period of two months to study the effects of talking about one’s emotions. Two kinds of responses were distinguished: comfort and a dissenting opinion. Comfort was things like providing attention, validation and empathy. A dissenting opinion is when the listener offers a different perspective on the situation. The results of the study showed that emotional recovery was most instant when the conversational partners provided a dissenting opinion. With their new outlook they could help put the situation in perspective, and to approach it from a more positive angle. This helped the sharers to look at the situation differently, causing them to feel less distress. Providing a dissenting opinion and different perspective thus form an effective way to reduce negative emotions in others.

January 2016, by Derk Versteeghen

**Control condition**

ROUGH PATCH? TALK ABOUT IT!

Talking about your feelings appears to be a good remedy against emotional distress.

Everyone is troubled by negative emotions like anger, sadness or disappointment every once in a while. Some people are better able to deal with these emotions than others. Talking about your negative emotions can bring relief. Researchers of the University of Birmingham followed 200 people for two months to study the effects of talking about one’s emotions. To this end, they used daily-diary methods. At random moments during the day, participants were probed via a smartphone to indicate which emotions they had experienced during the previous hour and whether they had shared these emotions with others. Every probe ended with a measure of the emotional state of the participant. The results showed that talking led to emotional recovery. When the participants had shared their emotions, they felt much better than when they had kept their feelings to themselves. Sharing your emotions thus appears an effective way to reduce emotional distress.

January 2016, by Derk Versteeghen

**Supplement 1.2: Instructions Used in Study 1**

In Study 1, after reading the bogus article participants had been randomly assigned to read, they were presented with different instructions, dependent on their experimental condition. These instructions are presented below.

**Socio-affective support goal condition**

Previous research shows that people who feel upset are best helped by comfort and empathy. However, there is very little known about what people do to acquire comfort and empathy from others. To gain more insight into this, we would now like to ask you to share an emotional event in such a way that you think you stand the biggest chance that your conversation partner will provide comfort and empathy.

You will now start sharing your story in front of the camera. Please read the instructions below carefully and take your time.

1. Please take the time to think back at a situation in your life in which you were worried that a relationship would end, or that you might lose someone. You can think of a bad period in a romantic relationship, a good friend or a family member with whom you were in a fight, or a loved one who moved away, etc. Please go back in time and try to immerse yourself in the situation.
2. Now imagine you are right back into it, and you’re talking to your friend on Skype. You both globally discussed your day, and you’re about to tell them about the situation at hand. You have a very strong need to be comforted by someone who is empathizing with you.
3. Please switch the hourglass whenever you’re ready, look at the camera, and tell your friend in maximally 3 minutes about the situation at hand. Try to describe the situation in such a way that your friend will show empathy and provide comfort. Start the video message by looking at the camera and calling your friend by name. Please call the experimenter who is in the room next door to start the camera before you start sharing!
4. When you’ve finished your video message you can proceed by clicking the arrow below.

**Cognitive support goal condition**

Previous research shows that people who feel upset are best helped by a dissenting opinion and a different perspective. However, there is very little known about what people do to acquire that dissenting opinion and different perspective from others. To gain more insight into this, we would now like to ask you to share an emotional event in such a way that you think you stand the biggest chance that your conversation partner will provide a dissenting opinion and a different perspective.

You will now start sharing your story in front of the camera. Please read the instructions below carefully and take your time.

1. Please take the time to think back at a situation in your life in which you were worried that a relationship would end, or that you might lose someone. You can think of a bad period in a romantic relationship, a good friend or a family member with whom you were in a fight, or a loved one who moved away, etc. Please go back in time and try to immerse yourself in the situation.
2. Now imagine you are right back into it, and you’re talking to your friend on Skype. You both globally discussed your day, and you’re about to tell them about the situation at hand. You have a very strong need to hear a dissenting opinion and for someone to convince you there is also a different way of looking at the situation.
3. Please switch the hourglass whenever you’re ready, look at the camera and tell your friend in maximally 3 minutes about the situation at hand. Please share your story in such a way that your friend will give a dissenting opinion and provide a different perspective. Start the video message by looking at the camera and calling your friend by name. Please call the experimenter who is in the room next door to start the camera before you start sharing!
4. When you’ve finished your video message you can proceed by clicking the arrow below.

**Control condition**

Previous research shows that people who feel upset benefit from talking about this with others. However, little is known about what people tell exactly. To gain more insight into this, we would now like to ask you to share an emotional event.

You will now start sharing your story in front of the camera. Please read the instructions below carefully and take your time.

1. Please take the time to think back at a situation in your life in which you were worried that a relationship would end, or that you might lose someone. You can think of a bad period in a romantic relationship, a good friend or a family member with whom you were in a fight, or a loved one who moved away, etc. Please go back in time and try to immerse yourself in the situation.
2. Now imagine you are right back into it, and you’re talking to your friend on Skype. You both globally discussed your day, and you’re about to tell them about the situation at hand.
3. Please switch the hourglass whenever you’re ready, look at the camera and tell your friend in maximally 3 minutes about the situation at hand. There are no right or wrong answers. Start the video message by looking at the camera and calling your friend by name. Please call the experimenter who is in the room next door to start the camera before you start sharing!
4. When you’ve finished your video message you can proceed by clicking the arrow below.

**Supplement 1.3: Coding Scheme Used in Study 1**

Below is the coding scheme that was used in Study 1. It is an adapted version of a coding scheme developed by Feldkamp, Sauter and Fischer (2018). Not all categories were used in the analyses (see the Methods section of Study 1).

**Emotion terms**

* *Specific emotion terms*
	+ Explanation: Words *directly* referring to specific affective states. This also includes the described absence of a specific state (i.e. indicating not to feel a specific emotional state).
	+ Subcategories:
		- Specific emotion terms referring to the self
			* E.g. “I felt sad”
		- Specific emotion terms referring to others
			* E.g. “She was very angry”
* *Valence-only emotion terms*
	+ Explanation: Words *directly* referring to affective state but only in terms of valence.
	+ Subcategories:
		- Valence-only emotion terms referring to the self
			* E.g. “I felt bad”
		- Valence-only emotion terms referring to others
			* E.g. “He was down”
* *Emotion-related actions referring to the self*
	+ Explanation: Actions and emotional responses *indirectly* referring to affective states, such as physiological reactions, motor expressions and action tendencies.
	+ Subcategories:
		- Specific emotion terms referring to the self
			* E.g. “I wanted to cry”
		- Specific emotion terms referring to others
			* E.g. “He was blushing”

**Appraisals**

* *Novelty/Expectation*
	+ Explanation: Did you *expect* this situation to occur?
	+ Subcategories:
		- Expected
			* E.g. “I was waiting for this to happen”
		- Unexpected
			* E.g. “I did not see this coming”
* *Intrinsic Pleasantness*
	+ Explanation: Did you find the event itself *pleasant* or *unpleasant*?
	+ Subcategories:
		- Unpleasant
			* E.g. “Something horrible happened”
		- Pleasant
			* E.g. “It was fun”
* *Coping potential*
	+ Explanation: How do you evaluate your *ability to act on or to cope with* the event and its consequences when you were confronted with this situation?
	+ Subcategories:
		- High
			* E.g. “I felt we could figure it out together”
		- Low
			* E.g. “I don’t know what to do”
* *Compatibility with external standards (Norms & Fairness)*
	+ Explanation: If the event was caused by your own or someone else’ behavior, would this behavior itself be judged as *improper or immoral*? Would you say that the situation or event that caused your emotion was unjust or unfair?
	+ Subcategories:
		- Fair
			* E.g. “She had a point”
		- Unfair
			* E.g. “I find it so disrespectful”

**Emotion regulation strategies (i.e., attempts to regulate one’s own emotions)**

* *Suppression*
	+ Explanation: Describing that one is or was suppressing an emotional expression (or attempting to do so). This can also be an evaluation of inappropriateness of (expressing or experiencing) one’s emotion (but thereby indicating one in fact *is* feeling it).
	+ Subcategories:
		- Current
			* E.g. “Who am I to say something about this?”
		- Past
			* E.g. “I was holding back my tears”
* *Reappraisal*
	+ Explanation: Putting the situation in perspective, trying to see it from a different angle (e.g., more positive, or broader perspective).
	+ Subcategories:
		- Current
			* E.g. “[She was being very mean to me], but maybe she was just having a bad day”
		- Past
			* E.g. “[I knew it would be hard], but I tried to tell myself it would only be temporary”
* *Distraction*
	+ Explanation: Diverting attention.
	+ Subcategories:
		- Current
			* E.g. “I try not to think about it too much”
		- Past
			* E.g. “I decided to just go party”
* *Explicit request for the other’s view*
* Explanation: Attempt to (emotionally) involve the imagined receiver of the message and ask for an emotional response, help, advice, their view or experience.
	+ Subcategories:
		- Current
			* Note that an explicit request needs to be made to the other person, thus implying two conditions: (1) the other is explicitly addressed (“you”) and (2) they explicitly request a reaction from the other person. Thus, rhetorical questions or statements that do not necessarily require a response from the other person are not coded.
			* E.g. “I’m curious what you think of this situation”
		- Past
			* These concern past attempts to receive support from someone else. This can be any kind of social support: socio-affective, cognitive or physical
			* E.g. “I called my friend to ask what she thought”

**Supplement 1.4: Stories Used in Study 2**

In Study 2, participants were presented with two stories. Depending on the condition they were randomly assigned to, they received one of the three versions emphasizing emotion terms, appraisals, or just facts (i.e. control condition). These are presented separately below.

**Instructions (for both stories, same for all conditions):**

Please imagine meeting up with a friend of yours. You haven’t seen each other for a week and you’re just catching up. They tell you the following story:

**Story 1: Appraisal Condition**

Last weekend was awful. Remember the camping trip me and Sam had planned for months? That was last weekend. So we were out there all weekend, in the woods. And all this time, Sam was being a bit distant, mostly in his own world you know, kind of ignoring me. It was very strange. Most of the time I just tried to enjoy the surroundings, our hikes, cooking dinner, sitting by the fire. But at the end of the weekend, I asked him what was up, why he was so quiet and distant. First, he didn’t say anything, he was being really quiet. But then, after a lot of probing, he in the end told me that he had cheated on me. It was really unexpected. It was with this girl who I even know – I thought she was just a friend of his. So crazy. He said it had only happened once, that he’s not in love with her, and that he still wants to be with me. It’s such a heartbreaking situation. We’ve been together for such a long time. And it turned out that people around me knew about it, and never told me or did anything about it. It’s so disrespectful that none of them told me, and there’s nothing I can do about it. And now it has been days since I talked with him, and I don’t know what to do.

**Story 1: Emotion Terms Condition**

So I felt awful last weekend. Remember the camping trip me and Sam had planned for months? That was last weekend. So we were out there all weekend, in the woods. And all this time, Sam was being a bit distant, mostly in his own world you know, kind of ignoring me. I felt very uncomfortable. Most of the time I just tried to enjoy the surroundings, our hikes, cooking dinner, sitting by the fire. But at the end of the weekend, I asked him what was up, why he was so quiet and distant. First, he didn’t say anything, he was being really quiet. But then, after a lot of probing, he in the end told me that he had cheated on me. And that really hurt me. It was with this girl who I even know – I thought she was just a friend of his. I was shocked. He said it had only happened once, that he’s not in love with her, and that he still wants to be with me. I feel heartbroken. We’ve been together for such a long time. And it turned out that people around me knew about it, and never told me or did anything about it. I’m so angry, and sad.. And now it has been days since I talked with him, and I feel so helpless.

**Story 1: Control Condition**

Remember the camping trip me and Sam had planned for months? That was last weekend. So we were out there all weekend, in the woods. And all this time, Sam was being a bit distant, mostly in his own world you know, kind of ignoring me. Most of the time I just tried to enjoy the surroundings, our hikes, cooking dinner, sitting by the fire. But at the end of the weekend, I asked him what was up, why he was so quiet and distant. First, he didn’t say anything, he was being really quiet. But then, after a lot of probing, he in the end told me that he had cheated on me. It was with this girl who I even know – I thought she was just a friend of his. He said it had only happened once, that he’s not in love with her, and that he still wants to be with me. We’ve been together for such a long time. And it turned out that people around me knew about it, and never told me or did anything about it. And now it has been days since I talked with him.

**Story 2: Appraisal Condition**

Remember I told you I about my annual review at work? I had it last Friday. And guess what? I was laid off.. It was so unexpected. You know how much I liked my job. And I’ve been working there for five years now. I’ve always performed well, always been on time, never turned down extra chores. This is so unfair. My boss told me that they are having many layoffs, budget cuts you know. He said it wasn’t me, that there was nothing I could have done differently. But still.. I will need to leave by the end of summer. It really sucks to have to leave the place. And it’s unclear whether I’ll be able to find another job soon. I still have to pay back my student loans from college. This sucks so badly. There are so many things I want to do, places I want to go to. I’ve been meaning to get a gym subscription, I wanted to travel next winter. So many things. Having no job and no money messes up everything. It’s such a difficult situation. And it’s totally out of my hands. And now I’ll need to start looking for a job. There may not be any jobs available.

**Story 2: Emotion Terms Condition**

Remember I told you I about my annual review at work? I had it last Friday. And guess what? I was laid off.. I was so shocked. You know how much I liked my job. And I’ve been working there for five years now. I’ve always performed well, always been on time, never turned down extra chores. This really makes me angry. My boss told me that they are having many layoffs, budget cuts you know. He said it wasn’t me, that there was nothing I could have done differently. But still.. I will need to leave by the end of summer. I’m really sad to have the leave the place. And I’m worried I may not be able to find another job soon. I still have to pay back my student loans from college. I feel so frustrated. There are so many things I want to do, places I want to go to. I’ve been meaning to get a gym subscription, I wanted to travel next winter. So many things. Having no job and no money messes up everything. I feel so annoyed and helpless. And now I’ll need to start looking for a job. This really worries me.

**Story 2: Control Condition**

Remember I told you I about my annual review at work? I had it last Friday. And guess what? I was laid off.. You know how much I liked my job. And I’ve been working there for five years now. I’ve always performed well, always been on time, never turned down extra chores. My boss told me that they are having many layoffs, budget cuts you know. He said it wasn’t me, that there was nothing I could have done differently. But still.. I will need to leave by the end of summer. I still have to pay back my student loans from college. There are so many things I want to do, places I want to go to. I’ve been meaning to get a gym subscription, I wanted to travel next winter. So many things. Having no job and no money messes up everything. And now I’ll need to start looking for a job.

**Supplement 1.5: Stories Used in Study 3**

In Study 3, participants were presented with two stories. Depending on the condition they were randomly assigned to, they received one of the four versions emphasizing emotion terms, appraisals, explicit request for the other’s view or just facts (i.e. control condition). These are presented separately below.

**Instructions (for both stories, same for all conditions):**

Please imagine meeting up with a friend of yours. You haven’t seen each other for a week and you’re just catching up. They tell you the following story:

**Story 1: Appraisal Condition**

Last weekend did not go as I had expected. Remember the camping trip with our college friends Alex and I had planned for months? That was last weekend. So we were out there all weekend, in the woods. And all this time, Alex was so focused on Melissa that I could hardly talk to him. You know, like, any time she would go anywhere, he’d follow her around. Most of the time I just tried to enjoy the surroundings, our hikes, cooking dinner, sitting by the fire. But then he sat with her by the bonfire. I thought that was a bit strange, and also quite inappropriate. I mean, I know we were with friends and all, but still, I had expected him to want to make a bit of a romantic weekend out of it too. So I really didn’t like seeing him being around Melissa all the time. We did have some quality time together though. We slept in our own little cabin. And when it was just the two of us, it was like any other day. But when we were all together, I just had the impression he was constantly looking at Melissa, trying to get her attention. I didn’t really know what to do about it. I don’t know if he might have feelings for her. That would suck.

**Story 1: Emotion Terms Condition**

Last weekend was quite disappointing. Remember the camping trip with our college friends Alex and I had planned for months? That was last weekend. So we were out there all weekend, in the woods. And all this time, Alex was so focused on Melissa. It really frustrated me. You know, like, any time she would go anywhere, he’d follow her around. Most of the time I just tried to enjoy the surroundings, our hikes, cooking dinner, sitting by the fire. But then he sat with her by the bonfire. That really surprised me and made me feel quite lonely. I mean, I know we were with friends and all, but still, I had expected him to want to make a bit of a romantic weekend out of it too. Seeing him being around Melissa all the time really made me feel sad. We did have some quality time together though. We slept in our own little cabin. And when it was just the two of us, it was like any other day. But when we were all together, I just had the impression he was constantly looking at Melissa, trying to get her attention. I really felt a bit helpless. I’m worried he might have feelings for her. That would really hurt me.

**Story 1: Control Condition**

Remember the camping trip with our college friends Alex and I had planned for months? That was last weekend. So we were out there all weekend, in the woods. And all this time, Alex was so focused on Melissa. You know, like, any time she would go anywhere, he’d follow her around. Most of the time I just tried to enjoy the surroundings, our hikes, cooking dinner, sitting by the fire. But then he sat with her by the bonfire. I mean, I know we were with friends and all, but still, I had expected him to want to make a bit of a romantic weekend out of it too. We did have some quality time together though. We slept in our own little cabin. And when it was just the two of us, it was like any other day. But when we were all together, I just had the impression he was constantly looking at Melissa, trying to get her attention.

**Story 1: Explicit Request Condition**

Remember the camping trip with our college friends Alex and I had planned for months? That was last weekend. So we were out there all weekend, in the woods. And all this time, Alex was so focused on Melissa. You know, like, any time she would go anywhere, he’d follow her around. Most of the time I just tried to enjoy the surroundings, our hikes, cooking dinner, sitting by the fire. But then he sat with her by the bonfire. So yeah.. how would you feel? Have you ever experienced something like that? I mean, I know we were with friends and all, but still, I had expected him to want to make a bit of a romantic weekend out of it too. We did have some quality time together though. We slept in our own little cabin. And when it was just the two of us, it was like any other day. But when we were all together, I just had the impression he was constantly looking at Melissa, trying to get her attention. I don’t know.. what do you think of this whole situation?

**Story 2: Appraisal Condition**

Did I tell you that my company is merging with another company? It’s really unclear what to expect. I heard people say that there may be quite some layoffs. I did not see this coming. You know how much I like my job. And I’ve been working there for five years now. I’ve always performed well, am always on time, never turned down extra chores. It would be so unfair if they’d let me go. Also, it’s creating all this instability at work. People are fearing their jobs, which makes everyone so competitive all of sudden. I really don’t like it. Apparently they have to make some serious budget cuts within in my department. It really sucks. I don’t know if I’ll be able to keep my job. Yet I could really use the money. I still have to pay back my student loans from college. Also, I had planned a road trip in South America this winter. This whole thing goes against all my plans, and it’s so out of my hands you know.

**Story 2: Emotion Terms Condition**

Did I tell you that my company is merging with another company? It really worries me. I heard people say that there may be quite some layoffs. I was really surprised. You know how much I like my job. And I’ve been working there for five years now. I’ve always performed well, am always on time, never turned down extra chores. I’d be really angry if they’d let me go. Also, it’s creating all this instability at work. People are fearing their jobs, which makes everyone so competitive all of sudden. It makes me feel really uncomfortable. Apparently they have to make some serious budget cuts within in my department. I feel really bad. I’m worried whether I’ll be able to keep my job. Yet I could really use the money. I still have to pay back my student loans from college. Also, I had planned a road trip in South America this winter. This whole thing makes me feel so frustrated and helpless.

**Story 2: Control Condition**

Did I tell you that my company is merging with another company? I heard people say that there may be quite some layoffs. You know how much I like my job. And I’ve been working there for five years now. I’ve always performed well, am always on time, never turned down extra chores. Also, it’s creating all this instability at work. People are fearing their jobs, which makes everyone so competitive all of sudden. Apparently they have to make some serious budget cuts within in my department. Yet I could really use the money. I still have to pay back my student loans from college. Also, I had planned a road trip in South America this winter.

**Story 2: Explicit Request Condition**

Did I tell you that my company is merging with another company? I heard people say that there may be quite some layoffs. You know how much I like my job. And I’ve been working there for five years now. I’ve always performed well, am always on time, never turned down extra chores. Also, it’s creating all this instability at work. People are fearing their jobs, which makes everyone so competitive all of sudden. Have you ever been in a similar situation? Apparently they have to make some serious budget cuts within in my department. Yet I could really use the money. I still have to pay back my student loans from college. Also, I had planned a road trip in South America this winter. I don’t know.. what do you think of this whole situation? Any thoughts on how to deal with this?

**2. Supplemental Analyses**

**Supplement 2.1: Additional Measures and Analyses Study 1**

**Scale construction self-reported support goals.** In order to assess self-reported support goals, we used 20 items, based on the two factors reflecting socio-affective and cognitive support that were extracted in Pauw, Sauter, Van Kleef & Fischer (2018). In this study, we used the Social Sharing Motives Scale (SSMS-39; Duprez, Christophe, Rimé, Congard, & Antoine, 2014). We added two items to the scale to capture reappraisal more specifically (i.e., “get a different perspective on the situation” and “get a more positive view on the situation”), given that this component was relatively absent in the original scale (Duprez et al.; Rimé, 2009), yet was key to our study.

In order to verify the predicted two-component structure, we took a systematic approach involving three steps. First, based on recommendations by Russell (2002), we conducted a parallel exploratory factor analysis, using principle axis factoring and promax rotation. Based on three criteria we decided on the number of factors extracted: (1) the point at which eigenvalues of the actual data drop below the eigenvalues of the random data, (2) the scree plot and (3) the eigenvalues. According to the first criterion, four factors should be extracted. According to the scree plot, however, only three factors appear to fall above the randomly plotted factors, and the plot bends after the third factor. Finally, the eigenvalue of the fourth factor is lower than 1 and thus explains very little variance (3.4%). Therefore, the most reasonable and parsimonious number of factors to be extracted seemed to be three.

As a second step, we conducted an exploratory factor analysis with principle axis factoring and a promax rotation, now fixing the number of factors to be extracted to three. This resulted in a first factor representing Cognitive Support (8 items; explained variance 36.2%), a second factor representing Socio-Affective Support (6 items; explained variance 12.6%) and a third factor tapping into Clarification and Meaning (5 items; explained variance 7.2%). One item (i.e. “have my view of the event validated”) did not load sufficiently high on any of the three factors (i.e. factor loading lower than .3) and was therefore discarded.

Finally, as a third step, given that we were interested in using these items to verify whether our cognitive and socio-affective support goal manipulation succeeded, we created subscales of the first two factors representing cognitive (α = .91) and socio-affective support (α = .87) and discarded the third factor. It should be noted, however, that combining all items belonging to the first and third factor into one overarching category of cognitive support (as originally intended) yields the same findings.

Table 1. *Factor Loadings of all Items Assessing Self-Reported Support Goals Loading Above .3 onto Three Factors (Cognitive Support, Socio-Affective (SA) Support and Clarification and Meaning).*

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Items** | **F1: Cognitive Support** | **F2: SA Support** | **F3: Clarification** |
| 3. Receive suggestions | .89 |  |  |
| 1. Learn their perspective on the situation | .85 |  |  |
| 2. Find out their opinion | .83 |  |  |
| 15. Receive an outside perspective | .80 |  |  |
| 18. Obtain another perspective on the situation | .72 |  |  |
| 7. See how they would have reacted | .69 |  |  |
| 5. Find out how they would have reacted | .66 |  |  |
| 19. Get a more positive view on the situation | .41 |  |  |
| 20. Be supported |  | .95 |  |
| 8. Receive support |  | .94 |  |
| 10. Feel I can rely on someone |  | .84 |  |
| 14. Be helped | (.38) | .56 |  |
| 11. Feel connected |  | .50 | (.31) |
| 12. Elicit empathy |  | .48 |  |
| 6. Analyze what happened |  |  | .90 |
| 16. Find meaning in what occurred |  |  | .70 |
| 13. Better understand what happened |  |  | .68 |
| 17. Clarify my feelings about what happened |  |  | .64 |
| 4. Put the situation into perspective | (.33) |   | .42 |

**Emotional intensity.** Participants rated the extent to which they experienced six emotions when thinking back at the situation, using a 100-point slider bar (0 = *not at all*, 100 = *very much*). The target emotions were worry, sadness, anger, anxiety, frustration, and doubt.[[1]](#footnote-1) To check whether participants indeed recalled emotional instances mostly evoking worry, a Repeated Measures ANOVA was conducted with Emotion (worry vs. sadness vs. anxiety vs. anger vs. doubt vs. frustration) as a within subjects variable. Mauchly’s test indicated that the assumption of sphericity had been violated, χ2(14) = 157.55, *p* < .001. Therefore, degrees of freedom were corrected using Greenhouse-Geisser estimates of sphericity (ε = .71). There was an overall significant effect of Emotion, *F*(3.53, 656.46) = 26.18, *p* < .001, ηp2 = .12. Simple contrasts revealed that as predicted, participants experienced more worry (*M* = 45.70, *SD* = 32.45) than anger (*M* = 34.02, *SD* = 29.87; *F*[1, 186] = 13.73, *p* < .001, ηp2 = .07) and anxiety (*M* = 31.68, *SD* = 29.29; *F*[1, 186] = 43.95, *p* < .001, ηp2 = .19). Participants did not, however, experience more worry as compared to frustration (*M* = 45.99, *SD* = 30.81; *F*[1, 186] = 0.01, *p* = .926, ηp2 < .001) and doubt (*M* = 42.48, *SD* = 30.00; *F*[1, 186] = 1.82, *p* = .179, ηp2 = .01). Finally, contrary to expectations, participants experienced more sadness (*M* = 58.27, *SD* = 25.49) than worry (*F*([1, 186] = 27.89, *p* < .001, ηp2 = .13). It thus appeared that participants recalled relatively mixed emotional experiences, including worry, doubt, sadness and frustration.

**Perceived support effectiveness.** To verify that participants had not only read and understood the article, but also endorsed the message that was conveyed, we asked participants to indicate to what extent the article had convinced them and led them to agree with eight statements about the effectiveness of either socio-affective or cognitive support. As expected, a promax rotated factor analysis yielded two factors: Socio-Affective Support (α = .70) and Cognitive Support (α = .67). An example item of the socio-affective support subscale is “Empathy of the listener is most crucial to making one feel better”. An example item of the cognitive support scale is “By talking to another person, you can put emotional situations in a more positive perspective”.

To check whether reading the article convinced participants of the effectiveness of socio-affective support, cognitive support or mere sharing, we conducted a mixed ANOVA with Support Goal Condition (socio-affective support vs. cognitive support vs. control condition) as a between-subjects variable and Support Type (perceived effectiveness of socio-affective vs. cognitive support) as a within-subjects factor. A significant main effect of Support Type emerged (*F*[1, 184] = 42.67, *p* < .001, ηp2 = .19), indicating that overall, participants perceived socio-affective support to be more effective than cognitive support. While there was no main effect of Support Goal Condition (*F*[2, 184] = 2.73, *p* = .068, ηp2 = .03), there was a significant interaction effect between Support Goal Condition and Support Type (*F*[2, 184] = 12.58, *p* < .001, ηp2 = .12). Follow-up tests indicated that Support Goal Condition significantly affected participants’ belief in the effectiveness of socio-affective support, *F*(2, 184) = 3.48, *p* = .033, ηp2 = .04. Bonferroni-corrected pairwise comparisons revealed that participants in the socio-affective support goal condition (*M* = 79.69, *SD* = 10.52) perceived socio-effective support to be more important for emotional recovery than did those in the cognitive goal condition (*M* = 74.56, *SD* = 11.42; *p* = .037). However, there was no significant difference between the socio-affective support goal condition and the control condition (*M* = 75.74, *SD* = 12.10; *p* = .163).

Support Goal Condition also significantly affected the perceived effectiveness of cognitive support, *F*(2, 184) = 7.20, *p* = .001, ηp2 = .07. Those in the cognitive support goal condition (*M* = 75.08, *SD* = 12.75) believed that cognitive support was (marginally) more important to emotional recovery compared to those in the socio-affective support goal condition (*M* = 69.72, *SD* = 12.41; *p* = .067) and those in the control condition (*M* = 66.33, *SD* = 13.81; *p* = .001). Taken together, reading the article affected participants’ perceptions regarding the effectiveness of both types of support in the intended way, albeit with small effects.

**Supplement 2.2: Additional Measures and Analyses Study 2**

**Inferred support goals.** In order to assess inferred support goals, participants were asked the following question: “Now please imagine again being in the conversation with your friend. Having heard their story, to what extent do you think they wanted you to ...”, followed by eight different types of support. A promax rotated exploratory factor analysis using principle axis factoring yielded two factors in both stories. All items including their component loadings across the two stories are presented in Table 2 below.

Table 2. *Factor Loadings of all Items Assessing Inferred Support Goals Loading above .3 onto Two Factors. For Both Stories, Factor 1 Denotes Cognitive Support Goals and Factor 2 Denotes Socio-Affective Support Goals.*

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|   | **Story 1** | **Story 2** |
| **Items** | **Factor 1** | **Factor 2** | **Factor 1** | **Factor 2** |
| Put what occurred into perspective | .88 |  | .86 |  |
| Help the to look at the situation from a different perspective | .82 |  | .88 |  |
| Provide an outside perspective | .77 |  | .80 |  |
| Help them to find meaning in what occurred | .70 |  | .67 |  |
| Show compassion |  | .90 |  | .90 |
| Be empathic |  | .85 |  | .85 |
| Convey understanding |  | .62 |  | .62 |
| Provide care |   | .30 |   |  |

**Manipulation check.** To assess the effectiveness of the manipulation, we included two measures to tap the *perceived* use of appraisals and emotion words. Instead of asking for the perceived frequencies, we asked participants to what extent they thought the sharer had emphasized how they *thought* and *felt* about the situation. We chose these indirect questions to measure how listeners perceive expressions of emotions and appraisals because we did not expect participants to be familiar with the concept of appraisals. The ratings for both stories were averaged, yielding one score for perceived focus on thoughts and one score for perceived focus on emotions.

To assess whether the different emotional expression conditions were perceived as differentially emphasizing feelings and thoughts, we conducted a MANOVA with Emotional Expression condition as the predictor of perceived emphasis on feelings and perceived emphasis on thoughts. Overall, Emotional Expression exerted a significant omnibus effect, *F*(4, 394) = 11.08, *p* < .001, ηp2 = .10. First, Emotional Expression condition had a significant main effect on the perceived emphasis on *feelings*, *F*(2, 197) = 22.59, *p* < .001, ηp2 = 19. Bonferroni-corrected pairwise comparisons showed that, as intended, participants in the emotion condition (*M* = 85.96, *SD* = 12.63) perceived the protagonist to emphasize their feelings significantly more compared to those in the appraisal condition (*M* = 78.21, *SD* = 19.16; *p* = .046) and those in the control condition (*M* = 64.83, *SD* = 21.97; *p* < .001). Furthermore, those in the appraisal condition also perceived the protagonist to emphasize more how they felt compared to those in the control condition (*p* < .001).

Second, Emotional Expression condition had a significant main effect on the perceived emphasis on *thoughts*, *F*(2, 197) = 9.39, *p* < .001, ηp2 = 09. While participants in the appraisal condition (*M* = 78.85; *SD* = 17.00) did not think the protagonist emphasized their thoughts more than did those in the emotion condition (*M* = 79.51, *SD* = 17.38; *p* = 1.00), both those in the appraisal condition (*p* = .001) and those in the emotion condition (*p* < .001) did perceive the protagonist to emphasize more how they thought about the situation compared to those in the control condition (*M* = 67.52, *SD* = 19.30)*.* In sum, the use of emotion words led to a greater perceived emphasis on feelings compared to the use of appraisals and the control condition. The inclusion of appraisals led to a greater perceived emphasis on thoughts compared to the control condition, but not compared to the emotion condition.

**Exploratory analyses: Distress and severity.** To test whether our exploratory findings as discussed in the Results section of Study 2 would hold for the separate stories, we conducted two robust regression analyses, one predicting inferred socio-affective support goals and one predicting cognitive support goals, for story 1 and 2 separately. Perceived emotional distress and severity were entered as predictors. The findings are presented below in Table 3 (inferred socio-affective goals) and Table 4 (inferred cognitive goals). As can be seen in Table 3, the effects on socio-affective support goals observed across the two stories are highly similar to those of the two stories separately. Perceived emotional distress consistently positively predicts inferred socio-affective support goals, whereas perceived severity does not.

Table 3.

*Robust Multiple Regression Analysis Predicting Inferred Socio-Affective Support Goals by Perceived Emotional Distress and Severity, for Story 1 and Story 2 Separately (Study 2).*

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|   | Story 1 |   | Story 2 |
|   | *B* | *SE B* | 95% CI | *p* |  | *B* | *SE B* | 95% CI | *p* |
| Emotional Distress | 0.53 | 0.08 | [0.39-0.70] | <.001 |  | 0.53 | 0.08 | [0.36-0.69] | <.001 |
| Perceived Severity | 0.07 | 0.06 | [-0.05-0.18] | .266 |   | 0.01 | 0.07 | [-0.11-0.15] | .884 |

*Note.*Bootstrap results are based on 2000 bootstrap samples.

In contrast, as can be seen in Table 4, the observed effects on inferred cognitive support goals on the data for the two stories combined (reported in the main manuscript) do not replicate when conducting the analyses for the two stories separately. For both Story 1 and 2, perceived emotional distress and severity did not significantly predict inferred cognitive goals.

Table 4.

*Robust Multiple Regression Analysis predicting Inferred Cognitive Support Goals by Perceived Emotional Distress and Severity, for Story 1 and Story 2 Separately (Study 2).*

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|   | Story 1 |   | Story 2 |
|   | *B* | *SE B* | 95% CI | *p* |  | *B* | *SE B* | 95% CI | *p* |
| Emotional Distress | 0.15 | 0.14 | [-0.14-0.42] | .286 |  | 0.24 | 0.14 | [-0.07-0.48] | 0.081 |
| Perceived Severity | 0.20 | 0.12 | [-0.04-0.43] | .101 |   | 0.08 | 0.12 | [-0.14-0.34] | 0.491 |

*Note.*Bootstrap results are based on 2000 bootstrap samples.

Finally, even though emotional distress and perceived severity seem to differentially predict the inference of socio-affective and cognitive support goals, both predictors do correlate positively with the two types of inferred support goals. See Table 5 for the raw correlations.

Table 5.

*Raw Correlations between Perceived Distress of the Protagonist (D), Perceived Severity of the Situation (S), Inferred Socio-Affective (SA) and Cognitive (C) Support Goals, Story 1 and Story 2 Separately (Study 2).*

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|   | Story 1 | Story 2 |
|  | D | S | SA | C | D | S | SA | C |
| Distress | 1 | .51\*\*\* | .49\*\*\* | .16\*\* | 1 | .55\*\*\* | .52\*\*\* | .18\* |
| Severity |  | 1 | .30\*\*\* | .19\*\*\* |  | 1 | .29\*\*\* | .14\* |
| SA support goal |  |  | 1 | .17\*\* |  |  | 1 | .27\*\*\* |
| C support goal |   |   |   | 1 |   |   |   | 1 |

*Note*. \*\*\* *p* =< .001; \*\* *p* =< .01; \* *p* < .05

**Supplement 2.3: Additional Measures and Analyses Study 3**

**Manipulation check.** Similar to Study 2, we included two measures to tap the *perceived* use of appraisals and emotion words. To assess whether the different emotional expression conditions were perceived as differentially emphasizing feelings and thoughts, we conducted a MANOVA with perceived emphasis on feelings and perceived emphasis on thoughts as the dependent variables and Emotional Expression (emotion vs. appraisal vs. explicit request vs. control condition) as the independent variable. Overall, Emotional Expression exerted a significant omnibus effect, *F*(6, 440) = 8.16, *p* < .001, ηp2 = .10. Emotional Expression had a significant main effect on the perceived emphasis on *feelings*, *F*(3, 220) = 14.98, *p* < .001, ηp2 = .17. Bonferroni-corrected pairwise comparisons showed that, partially in line with our predictions, those in the emotion condition (*M* = 82.63, *SD* = 15.13) perceived the protagonist to emphasize their emotions significantly more than those in the control condition (*M* = 65.35, *SD* = 19.23; *p* < .001) and those in the explicit request condition (*M* = 63.14, *SD* = 17.55; *p* < .001), though not more compared to those in the appraisal condition (*M* = 76.04, *SD* = 19.01; *p* = .307). Those in the appraisal condition also perceived the protagonist to emphasize more how they felt compared to those in the control condition (*p* = .011) and those in the explicit request condition (*p* = .001). Contrary to the expectations, Emotional Expression condition did not have a significant main effect on the perceived emphasis on *thoughts*, *F*(3, 220) = 1.65, *p* < .179, ηp2 = .02. Thus, those in the appraisal condition (*M* = 77.52, *SD* = 17.05) did not perceive the protagonist to place a greater emphasis on thoughts compared to those in the emotion condition (*M* = 73.21, *SD* = 19.68; *p* = 1.000), control condition (*M* = 70.85, *SD* = 19.33; *p* = .328), or explicit request condition (*M* = 70.93, *SD* = 16.04; *p* = .332).

In sum, the use of emotion words led to a greater perceived emphasis on feelings compared to the control condition and explicit request condition, but not compared to the appraisal condition. Furthermore, the inclusion of appraisals did not lead to a greater perceived emphasis on thoughts compared to any of the other conditions. Emotions and appraisals were thus interpreted as communicating one’s feelings and thoughts to the same extent.

**Exploratory analyses: Distress and severity.** To test whether our exploratory findings as discussed in Results section of Study 3 hold for the separate stories, we again conducted two robust regression analyses, one predicting inferred socio-affective support goals and one predicting cognitive support goals, for story 1 and 2 separately. Perceived emotional distress and severity were entered as predictors. The findings are presented below in Table 6 (inferred socio-affective goals) and Table 7 (inferred cognitive goals). As can be seen in Table 6, analyzing the two stories separately yields the same conclusions for inferred socio-affective support goals as when analyzing the combined effects. Replicating Study 2, perceived emotional distress consistently positively predicts inferred socio-affective support goals, whereas perceived severity does not.

Table 6.

*Robust Multiple Regression Analysis Predicting Inferred Socio-Affective Support Goals by Perceived Emotional Distress and Severity, for Story 1 and Story 2 Separately (Study 3).*

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|   | Story 1 |  | Story 2 |
|   | *B* | *SE B* | 95% CI | *p* |  | *B* | *SE B* | 95% CI | *p* |
| Emotional Distress | 0.50 | 0.07 | [0.36-0.63] | <.001 |  | 0.53 | 0.07 | [0.40-0.68] | <.001 |
| Perceived Severity | 0.07 | 0.05 | [-0.04-0.17] | .202 |   | 0.12 | 0.07 | [-0.02-0.25 | .080 |

*Note.*Bootstrap results are based on 2000 bootstrap samples.

In contrast, as can be seen in Table 7, the prediction of inferred cognitive support goals is more variable across the two stories. Perceived severity seems a stronger predictor of cognitive support goals than emotional distress.

Table 7.

*Robust Multiple Regression Analysis predicting Inferred Cognitive Support Goals by Perceived Emotional Distress and Severity, for Story 1 and Story 2 Separately (Study 3).*

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|   | Story 1 |   | Story 2 |
|   | *B* | *SE B* | 95% CI | *p* |  | *B* | *SE B* | 95% CI | *p* |
| Emotional Distress | 0.18 | 0.09 | [0.003-0.36] | .056 |  | 0.05 | 0.09 | [-0.12,0.24] | .614 |
| Perceived Severity | 0.14 | 0.07 | [0.01-0.28] | .047 |   | 0.44 | 0.10 | [0.22-0.62] | <.001 |

*Note.*Bootstrap results are based on 2000 bootstrap samples.

Finally, even though emotional distress and perceived severity differentially predict the inference of socio-affective and cognitive support goals, both predictors again do correlate positively with the two types of inferred support goals. See Table 8 for the raw correlations.

Table 8.

*Raw Correlations between Perceived Distress of the Protagonist (D), Perceived Severity of the Situation (S), Inferred Socio-Affective (SA) and Cognitive (C) Support Goals, Story 1 and Story 2 Separately (Study 3).*

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|   | Story 1 | Story 2 |
|  | D | S | SA | C | D | S | SA | C |
| Distress  | 1 | .47\*\*\* | .54\*\*\* | .23\*\*\* | 1 | .52\*\*\* | .62\*\*\* | .21\*\* |
| Severity  |  | 1 | .32\*\*\* | .23\*\*\* |  | 1 | .41\*\*\* | .35\*\*\* |
| SA goal |  |  | 1 | .32\*\*\* |  |  | 1 | .17\*\* |
| C goal |  |  |  | 1 |  |  |  | 1 |

*Note*. \*\*\* *p* =< .001; \*\* *p* =< .01

**Literature**

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1. Furthermore, we measured self-reported experienced and expressed emotional intensity. These findings go beyond the scope of this article, but are available upon request. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)