REVIEW

CPR
Consumer Psychology Review

SCP
SOCIETY FOR CONSUMER PSYCHOLOGY

The drive to disclose

Erin Carbone ⬤ | George Loewenstein

Department of Social and Decision Sciences, Carnegie Mellon University, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, USA

Correspondence
Erin Carbone, Department of Social and Decision Sciences, Carnegie Mellon University, 5000 Forbes Avenue, Porter Hall 321, Pittsburgh, PA 15213, USA.
Email: ecarbone@andrew.cmu.edu

Abstract

Disclosure is a pervasive behavior critical to the human experience, and has been the focus of both empirical research and theorizing by social and consumer psychologists. This work has typically characterized disclosure as a deliberate and strategic act, the product of a careful weighing of costs and benefits. In this paper, we argue that, although some disclosure can be deliberate and "rational," much of it exhibits drive-like qualities. We review evidence to suggest that, much like other drive states (e.g., hunger), the desire to disclose can be visceral, driven by emotions and physical arousal, and satiated through the act of disclosing. And just as more basic drives evolved to motivate adaptive action but can engender maladaptive behavior (e.g., over-eating), disclosures can likewise be impulsive and ultimately regrettable. We propose a dual-process model that encompasses both viscerally driven and deliberate disclosures and that makes sense of the conflicts that often arise between the two.

KEYWORDS
drive state, dual process theory, self-disclosure, self-regulation and self-control, social networks and social media

1 | INTRODUCTION

Human beings are social creatures, and sharing thoughts, feelings, and information with others is the principal means by which we fulfill our social needs and maintain the relationships that constitute our social lives. What individuals communicate to others is as diverse as human experience itself and influenced by an almost equally vast number of environmental and contextual factors. The importance and complexity of such exchanges have spawned research in disciplines across the social and behavioral sciences, and this research has evolved in response to emerging technologies that continually transform the landscape of interpersonal communication. In particular, social psychologists and consumer researchers have sought to identify the types of information that people are likely to disclose to specific others and the contexts and modalities (e.g., online vs. face-to-face) in which they are prone to do so.

Because disclosure is inherently interpersonal, models of disclosure have tended to focus on the characteristics of, and interplay between, conversational partners as determinants of disclosing behavior. And because disclosure typically involves the conscious, intentional sharing of information with others,[1] these models often highlight the conscious motives and goals that drive the decision to disclose. For instance, in Reis and Shaver's (1988) model of intimacy, needs motivate the expression of feelings and information to another party, and subsequent decisions to disclose are contingent on the feedback received from the target of the disclosure. According to the Disclosure Decision Model (DDM; Omarzu, 2000), situational cues make certain goals salient, and disclosure takes place if it is an effective and feasible means for achieving those goals. (See Section 2.3 for a more detailed discussion of these and other models.)

The two models outlined above are characteristic of existing attempts at modeling disclosure, which generally adopt a social exchange theoretical approach (Thibaut & Kelley, 1959) and interpret self-disclosure in terms of the associated costs and benefits to those involved in the exchange (Andrade et al., 2002). Although they offer a reasonable representation of certain types of disclosure in certain contexts, we argue that neither model can provide a complete account of disclosing behavior. Specifically, Reis and Shaver's (1988) model can explain the factors that mediate disclosure in an ongoing discourse but has little to say about the initial decision to disclose—that is, why the discloser shared information in the first place. The DDM, on the other hand, details the initial decision to disclose but relies on the assumption that individuals "strategically manage their disclosures to control their social worlds and achieve social and personal goals" (Omarzu, 2000, p. 179). In this review, we present evidence to suggest that, while disclosure can be strategic and controlled, it can also exhibit drive-like qualities and be unreflective and impulsive. Just as we often find ourselves overconsuming and engaging in countless other impulsive behaviors, we can also overshare and disclose information despite, and often with full awareness of, the consequences. Given this evidence, we argue that disclosure may be better explained using a dual-process model of behavior in which disclosure can occur for deliberate, instrumental reasons but can also be fueled by more drive-like automatic mechanisms. Such a dual-process framework, rather than supplanting extant perspectives, provides a complement to existing models of disclosure, extending them to provide a more complete account of the universe of disclosing behavior.

The types of disclosures we discuss in the present paper are broad relative to existing research. The social psychological and privacy perspectives are typically concerned with self-disclosure, construed as the revelation of private, personal information and/or self-referential expressions of feelings, experiences, desires, and the like. Even when the information shared is not of this type, however, it can still communicate information about, and have implications for, oneself (Berger & Heath, 2007; Chung & Darke, 2006; Lampel & Bhalla, 2007).[2] For example, whether one gossips, and what gossip one shares, can be highly revealing not only of the subject of the gossip but also of the person relaying the gossip (Nevo et al., 1993). We develop these points more explicitly in a subsequent section of the paper (see Section 5).

In what follows, we present an overview of theoretical perspectives proposed to date in the disclosure literature and document that existing models have largely construed disclosure as deliberate and strategic (Section 2). We then draw on both qualitative (i.e., observed language use) and quantitative research to illustrate the drive-like features of disclosing behavior (Section 3), after which we discuss how a dual-process model might apply to the study of disclosure (Section 4). We conclude with a discussion of implications for consumer psychology (Section 5) and future research directions (Section 6).

2 | EXISTING PERSPECTIVES ON DISCLOSURE

As discussed above, theoretical models have mainly conceived of disclosure as a conscious, goal-oriented process in which individuals willfully share information based on an initial (and, in more dynamic models, ongoing) cost–benefit analysis.

2.1 | Costs

The costs in the disclosure calculus can be psychosocial as well as material. Exemplifying the former type, the revelation of insecurity or weakness can open one up to criticism and social rejection (Matsushima & Shiomi, 2001; Sermat & Smyth, 1973), potentially exacerbating the very vulnerability disclosed. In addition to possible rejection, revealing sensitive or emotional information can disrupt the relationship between conversational partners through several channels—e.g., causing emotional distress for, and eliciting unhelpful or harmful responses from, the listener—which can in turn have deleterious effects on the discloser, leading to isolation, feelings of low self-worth, anxiety, and depression (Kelly & McKillop, 1996). Even positive self-disclosures can be fraught with possible repercussions: For instance, sharing positive information about oneself can have negative social consequences when it is perceived as bragging (Scopelliti et al., 2015), and personal information of any valence can, instead of drawing the recipient of the information closer, be viewed as inappropriately intimate if misaligned with the norms of a social situation (Chaikin & Derlega, 1974). Even relaying impersonal information (e.g., sharing one's knowledge of events or the behavior and experiences of others) reflects on the discloser, at times unfavorably. For example, in revealing private (particularly negative) information about others, one risks earning the reputation of a "gossip," which is accompanied by decreased social power and likability (Farley, 2011), and invites retaliation from those whose confidence was betrayed. Disclosure can additionally lead to a reduction of one's autonomy and sense of self-efficacy (Baxter & Montgomery, 1996).

Turning to the latter (i.e., material) type of costs, disclosures made online, particularly on social network sites, are easily accessible by unintended audiences and can make the discloser vulnerable to reputational damage and consequences such as the loss of a job or employment opportunity (Mantouvalou, 2019), and even burglary or identity theft (Al-Daraiseh et al., 2014). Sharing neutral, descriptive information about oneself, particularly in the Internet age, can likewise entail material consequences when the information is used in an unauthorized way (Joinson & Paine, 2007), and when personally identifiable data are collected and stored in perpetuity and used in ways unintended or unanticipated by the discloser (Smith et al., 1996). Among the diverse possible material costs of such improper access and use are discriminatory practices in product pricing, hiring decisions, and the determination of benefits program eligibility (Pinchot et al., 2018). A vibrant privacy literature has emerged to investigate why people appear to be naïve to, or unconcerned about, such risks.

2.2 | Benefits

The benefits (or, somewhat synonymously, goals) of disclosure have inarguably received more attention in the literature, driven by

extensive empirical work in social and clinical psychology. An early attempt at enumerating the possible motivations for disclosing was a paper by Derlega and Grzelak (1979), which identified five basic functions that disclosure can serve: self-expression, self-clarification, social validation, relationship development, and social control. These categories have been adapted for subsequent models of disclosure, including the DDM (Omarzu, 2000), which attributes the decision to disclose to the activation of one or more of five possible goals: relief of distress, identity clarification, social approval, intimacy, and social control. Berger (2014) provides a list of, again, five overarching motives—somewhat overlapping with those enumerated by Omarzu—for sharing information: emotion regulation, impression-management, social bonding, persuasion, and information acquisition. Berger additionally includes a nearly exhaustive list of specific components (14 total) that comprise each higher-level function; for instance, impression management encompasses information shared in pursuit of self-enhancement, identity-signaling, and filling conversational space, while information seeking can entail seeking advice and resolving problems.

In addition to identifying explicit goals and motives that precede the decision to disclose, extensive empirical and clinical research has documented the positive health and psychological outcomes resulting from disclosure, particularly of troubling thoughts and experiences. This literature is discussed at length in a later section of the present paper (see Section 3.5). To the extent that people are aware of these outcomes, they can be understood as additional benefits considered when making the decision to disclose.

2.3 | Models

As noted, the typical model of disclosure casts the decision to disclose as the product of a rational weighing of costs and benefits of sharing information with others. Specific models vary in the extent to which each type of consideration (i.e., costs vs. benefits) factor into the decision-making process. For instance, in the risk revelation model (RRM; Afifi & Steuber, 2009), one's likelihood of revealing a secret is a function of an initial assessment of risk—to the self, others, and the relevant relationship(s)—as well as factors related to the discloser (i.e., need for catharsis and perceived ability to talk effectively about the information), the target of the disclosure (e.g., the target's need to know), and the relationship (i.e., closeness) between the two parties.

Not surprisingly, models in privacy research similarly focus on the cost side of what has been termed the *privacy calculus*, according to which rational actors weigh the expected costs and vulnerability associated with a loss of privacy against the benefits of releasing personal information (Acquisti et al., 2015; Dinev & Hart, 2006; Laufer & Wolfe, 1977; Smith et al., 2011).[3] The same is true of certain domain-specific models, such as the decision to disclose a concealable, stigmatized identity (e.g., disclosure processes model, DPM; Chaudoir & Fisher, 2010) or private, sensitive health information (e.g., disclosure

decision-making model, DD-MM; Greene, 2009). In the former, disclosure is preceded by a careful assessment of both the information and the potential receiver, as well as one's perceived "disclosure efficacy," to evaluate the likely result of the disclosure and determine whether the risks outweigh the benefits. In the latter model, disclosure can be preceded by an appraisal of both avoidance goals (i.e., to prevent negative outcomes, such as rejection or conflict) and approach goals (i.e., to pursue positive outcomes, such as educating or bonding with others), the combination of which determines whether or not a disclosure is optimal.

More commonly in the social and consumer psychology space, models focus on the benefits of disclosure. Here, the decision to disclose—and the type of information disclosed—is assumed to follow from the specific goals or motives activated in a particular situation and, in ongoing interactions, the extent to which those goals are met. In one of the first such models by Reis and Shaver (1988), a discloser is driven by her motives, needs, goals, and fears to express self-relevant feelings and information to another person, who in turn exhibits an emotional and behavioral response that is influenced by his own motives, needs, goals, and fears. The discloser's reaction to this feedback, and the extent to which she feels understood, validated, and cared for, then determine her future disclosing behavior with this conversational partner.

The DDM (Omarzu, 2000) fills a notable gap in the Reis and Shaver account by explicating what underlies the initial decision to disclose. This three-stage model begins with situational cues that make salient certain goals, such as social approval or intimacy (Stage 1). If disclosure is an appropriate strategy for achieving these goals and an appropriate target is readily available, a disclosure takes place (Stage 2). The amount (i.e., breadth and duration) and the depth of disclosure are then determined by an ongoing assessment of benefits (utility) and costs (risks), respectively. Interestingly, in the DDM, a consideration of costs occurs only after the initial decision to disclose has been made (Omarzu, 2000).[4]

In an update to these earlier models, Greene et al. (2006) present an account in which an individual initially weighs the reasons for and against self-disclosure, then assesses features of the current situation (e.g., the availability of, relationship to, and anticipated response by the target of disclosure). The immediate reactions by both the discloser and the target then influence subsequent disclosure decisions, as well as, ultimately, the consequences of disclosures for both parties to the conversation and the relationship between them.

Other models focus on disclosures that are related to consumer marketing and Word of Mouth (WOM), that is, "informal communications directed at other consumers about the ownership, usage, or characteristics of particular goods and services or their sellers" (Westbrook, 1987, p. 261). Alexandrov et al. (2013) model WOM as motivated, first, by personal benefits, or what the authors call self-needs (i.e., self-enhancement and self-affirmation), which then encourages a social interaction that activates the motive to fulfill social needs (i.e., social comparison and social bonding) and social intentions (i.e., helping others and providing social information). Which motives are dominant at the time of disclosure can determine

WOM valence, with self-enhancement motives encouraging positive WOM and self-affirmation driving negative WOM. Applying Berger's (2014; see Section 2.2 above) framework to the consumer landscape, WOM valence (and other content features) are similarly predicted by prevailing motives; for example, using disclosure in the service of impression management would likely result in positive, useful, or entertaining disclosures, whereas disclosing as a means of emotion regulation would likely trigger more negative and emotional or arousing disclosures (Berger, 2014).

Although the specifics vary, each of these models explicitly or implicitly characterizes disclosure decision making as a deliberate action taken in pursuit of specific goals and/or in consideration of possible risks. Decision makers are assumed to consider contextual factors, such as the sensitivity of the content and, relatedly, how disclosed information will be received, as well as the extent to which disclosing is likely to achieve the desired goals. Furthermore, disclosure is understood to be inherently interpersonal, and many have stressed the importance of interpreting and modeling it as a "situated interactional practice" (e.g., Antaki et al., 2005) "within the context of an ongoing interaction and wider environment" (Joinson & Paine, 2007, p. 242).

Taken together, we argue, these perspectives fail to capture a non-trivial subset of disclosure in which information is revealed without careful consideration of the costs or context and the act is itself driven more by intrapersonal than interpersonal forces. In the next section, we review evidence that disclosure is not always calculated and deliberate, as existing models suggest, but rather can take on an impulsive character. The existence of impulsive disclosures, combined with other empirical findings discussed below, are indicative of an underlying drive state and suggest that disclosure may be more fundamental and primal than is generally appreciated in the extant literature.

3 | THE DRIVE TO DISCLOSE

Disclosure as conceptualized in the above described models—that is, as a strategic decision-making process—is logically compatible with the assumption that instrumental goals drive the disclosure of favorable information. Indeed, many motives precipitating disclosure are self-oriented. Berger (2014), for example, notes that most information sharing is "either explicitly motivated by the self, or make the self better off as a by-product of interpersonal communication" (p. 597). Yet examples abound of instances in which disclosing information seems to be misguided, that is, at odds with the discloser's self-interest. Such disclosures confound economic and decision-theoretic accounts of information sharing, which assume that disclosure is strategic and that people disclose because, and only under the expectation that, disclosing will improve their outcomes and resultant well-being.

The quintessential, and arguably most revealing, examples of patently nonstrategic disclosures are confessions, succinctly defined as "speaking truthfully that which one most fears to speak" (Papanikolaou, 2006, p. 115). This can involve the admission of undesirable behaviors, actions, and somewhat transient thoughts and feelings, or the special case of confession involving the revelation of a socially undesirable and relatively stable feature of one's identity—that is, "coming out of the closet" (broadly speaking) and choosing "to no longer hide one's discreditable stigmatized condition" (Corrigan et al., 2009, p. 366). The sharing of such information often risks damaging the very social connections that are commonly assumed to motivate the disclosure in the first place. And, to the extent that a confession implicates the discloser in an ethical or legal wrongdoing, the ramifications can be even more severe than the costs enumerated in the previous section (Section 2.1).

The prevailing explanation for confessions is that decision makers rationally weigh these costs against the benefits of disclosing. Although benefits can take the material form of experiential information—for instance, practical information about strategies, resources, and general "know-how" from those with similar lived experiences (Borkman, 1999)—confessions often occur with little or no expectation of a useful, supportive response from the recipient of the information, or indeed any response at all: Our own work on confessions reveals that the vast majority (87%) of survey participants who made anonymous online confessions ($N = 195$) did so at least in part to "vent" or achieve emotional release, and participants' self-reported improvement in emotional and psychological state after confessing was virtually unaffected by whether or not they received feedback from others on the platform (Carbone et al., 2022). True, just as breaking a diet does bring pleasure from indulging or practicing unintended unsafe sex can be momentarily gratifying, confessing may result in psychological benefits, such as an "unburdening" of the pressure of concealment. Yet, in order to explain confession as a deliberate weighing of costs and benefits, the expected psychological benefits would need to outweigh the often sizeable risk of reputational or material cost. Instances of ultimately damaging and/or regretted disclosures would then need to be explained as a miscalculation at the outset by an otherwise rational decision maker.

An alternative—and we believe more plausible—account is that disclosure is, at times, influenced by visceral factors such as drive states or intense emotions that crowd out rational considerations (Loewenstein, 1996). In other words, at least some instances of disclosing behavior involve little or no calculation of the possible costs and benefits, and are instead automatic, unreflective responses to internal states. As a backdrop for the evidence presented in later subsections, we begin with a brief discussion of the defining characteristics of drive states.

3.1 | Drive states

A drive state is the experience of psychological tension or physical arousal that motivates the fulfillment of a psychological or physiological need (Hull, 1952), typically triggered by a combination of internal states (i.e., deprivation and goal of restoring homeostasis) and external stimuli (i.e., environmental cues; Loewenstein, 1994). Drives differ from other affective states in that they serve a biological function: Hunger motivates one to eat, thirst to drink, pain to eliminate a potentially harmful

factor in one's immediate environment (Bhatia & Loewenstein, 2022). They can exert a visceral, aversive motivational force with direct hedonic consequences on the individual and, at extreme levels, focus attention on behaviors associated with mitigating the activated need to the exclusion of all other goals, sometimes resulting in impulsive behavior and failures of self-control (Loewenstein, 1996).

Disclosure often fits the description of a behavior catalyzed by such an underlying drive. In what follows, we present evidence that individuals can experience a visceral, even overpowering desire to share information with others (Section 3.2), which, crucially, can be catalyzed by an affective state and accompanying (incidental) physical arousal (Section 3.3). Importantly, we demonstrate that disclosing behavior has an evolutionary basis (Section 3.4), plays a role in healthy functioning (Section 3.5), and has inherent hedonic value (Section 3.6). Finally, we discuss evidence that, as a result of the above factors, some disclosures can be characterized as impulsive rather than deliberate (Section 3.7). Table 1 presents a high-level overview of these features and some of the supporting evidence that is detailed in the remaining six subsections.

3.2 | Visceral desire to disclose

The overwhelming majority of empirical investigations on disclosure have explored individuals' willingness and propensity to disclose specific information with specific others. For instance, some of the earliest literature on the topic in social psychology explored the degree to which, and accuracy with which, individuals communicated about various informational domains (e.g., attitudes and opinions, well-being) with different targets (e.g., spouse, friend, or parent; Jourard & Lasakow, 1958). In the intervening decades, research has produced important findings regarding the personality correlates of disclosure (e.g., McCarthy et al., 2017), and the informational (e.g., Berger & Schwartz, 2011; Cooney et al., 2017; Heath et al., 2001) and contextual features (e.g., Butler et al., 2003; James & Drakich, 1993) that influence whether or not a disclosure is likely to take place.

But the empirical focus on evaluating, for example, the frequency and quality (e.g., depth, breadth, authenticity, and intimacy) of disclosures themselves has come at the expense of investigations into the psychological experience preceding the act of disclosing. Exceptions include empirical work consistently demonstrating that around 80% of those who have experienced a traumatic event (e.g., life-threatening diagnoses, loss of loved one, disasters) or simply a commonplace misfortune exhibit a sometimes urgent "need" to share it with others. For example, Ersland et al. (1989) surveyed personnel from a rescue mission involving a capsized oil rig in which 123 people were killed. Survey responses indicated that 88% of the rescuers felt "a need to work through the emotional disaster experiences by sharing their feelings with others" (p. 44). (For a review, see Rimé, 2009.)

TABLE 1 Overview of evidence for the drive-like features of disclosure

Drive-state characteristics	Evidence on disclosure
Visceral factors	*The desire to disclose can be visceral, even aversive.* • ≈80% of study participants consistently report experiencing a(n intense) need to disclose to others, often (but not exclusively) after a traumatic event. • Literary and colloquial reliance on hydraulic metaphors and analogies to other drive states highlight this visceral, aversive nature of disclosure.
Emotion and arousal	*Disclosure is increasing in emotionality, mediated by physical arousal.* • The propensity to disclose one's emotional experience and share emotion-eliciting content increases with emotional intensity and level of physical arousal. • The desire to disclose can be elicited by incidental emotion and arousal.
Evolution and adaptation	*Disclosure is (socially) adaptive and evolutionarily encouraged.* • Disclosure serves an adaptive function, paying social dividends to the discloser (e.g., increased likeability and relationship maintenance/progression) and benefitting the collective (e.g., enabling social coordination and transmitting social norms). • Humans have universally evolved cognitive and neurochemical systems to encourage communication and information transmission.
Deprivation and satiation	*Satiation (deprivation) of disclosure can be psychologically and physiologically beneficial (damaging).* • Suppressing the need to disclose is associated with harmful behaviors (e.g., rumination) and health problems (e.g., anxiety and high blood pressure). • Disclosure is an integral part of emotional processing and can improve immune functioning and health outcomes.
Hedonics	*Disclosure is inherently valuable and pleasurable.* • Sharing thoughts and information with others activates the reward centers of the brain. • Individuals accrue psychological benefits from disclosing, irrespective of what is shared and with whom (if anyone), and may even choose to do so at a financial cost.
Impulsivity	*The desire to disclose can lead to impulsive behavior.* • Empirical research documents the existence of immediate, impulsive, and ultimately regrettable disclosures, particularly on social media reportedly made in a "hot state." • The tendency to disclose is increasing in trait impulsivity.

Our own unpublished work takes such investigation a step further by attempting to document experiences of a visceral desire to disclose and quantify this experience (Carbone & Loewenstein, 2020). Asked whether they had ever felt like they were "dying" to tell someone something, the overwhelming majority (79%) of study participants ($N = 215$) indicated that they had indeed experienced such an intense desire to disclose in the past. In a second study ($N = 551$), participants were provided with a scale from -5 (intense, overwhelming desire to *withhold*) to 5 (intense, overwhelming desire to *share*) and asked to provide a numeric rating representing their desire to disclose (specific) past experiences that varied experimentally in terms of domain and valence. Although the desire to disclose was correlated with a binary indicator of whether the information was ultimately disclosed or not, average ratings varied dramatically across "scenarios," ranging from -0.79 (for the mean desire to share a painful childhood memory) to 3.63 (for the mean desire to share an infuriating customer service experience). One-quarter of respondents (25%) indicated that they experienced an "intense, overwhelming desire to share ($=5$)" in at least one of the scenarios presented to them, and another quarter (26%) provided at least one rating of 4 or 5 on the desire to share scale, suggesting that the experience of a powerful desire to disclose is indeed commonplace (above analysis not presented in Carbone & Loewenstein, 2020).

Further evidence of the ubiquity of this experience comes from the language used—both colloquially and literarily—to describe the desire to disclose. In the literary world, the desire to disclose has previously been likened to other drives, as in the quote below:

> "The desire to pass on information is like a hunger, and sometimes it is the curiosity, sometimes the indifference, of others that arouses it." - Edward St. Aubyn, *Never Mind*

Other writers have captured the aversive nature of being unable to share information with others, a feature discussed further in Section 3.5:

> "Nothing will ever please me, no matter how excellent or beneficial, if I must retain the knowledge of it to myself. And if wisdom were given me under the express condition that it must be kept hidden and not uttered, I should refuse it. No good thing is pleasant to possess, without friends to share it." - Seneca, *Moral Letters to Lucilius*

This is particularly true when describing the affective state that triggers a desire to disclose. For instance, one may have the sense that information is "eating one alive" or engendering a feeling of "desperation." One seeks to be "*spared* ... the *desperate* need to convey to someone else the vivid images of a rich inner life" (Joshua Ferris, *To Rise Again at a Decent Hour*, emphasis added). To others, this desire is like a disease:

> "And then she was aware of a morbid desire on her own part to tell the secret,– of a desire that amounted almost to a disease. It would soon burst her bosom open, unless she could share her knowledge with some one." - Anthony Trollope, *The Eustace Diamonds*

The above quote captures not only this aversiveness but also the tendency to employ hydraulic metaphors to describe the pressure (release) associated with withholding (revealing) information. Individuals experiencing an intense desire to disclose are often said to be "overflowing" or "bursting" with information. When it becomes too difficult to "hold it in" or "bottle it up" and a disclosure takes place, it might be considered an "information leak," or more dramatically, that the "flood gates opened" and the information came "spilling" out:

> "Jamie especially could not stop talking. Their once silent father in his state of dementia seemed unable to keep himself from *spilling forth* all he had held on to secretly for years, and Jamie, who had been silent himself, now had to *tumble* all he heard before them." - Elizabeth Strout, *Snow-Blind* (emphasis added)

The pervasiveness of such descriptions in everyday language and literature is a testament to the powerful, drive-like nature of the desire to disclose.

3.3 | Catalyzing effects of emotion and arousal

Unlike the dearth of empirical research on the powerful, visceral nature of the desire to disclose, there is ample evidence supporting the link between emotional states, physical arousal, and disclosure. Disclosure is often precipitated by an emotion-eliciting event, as is the case with the so-called "social sharing of emotion" (Rimé et al., 1991): Triggered by an emotional state, individuals often communicate with others about the circumstances of, and their reactions to, such events. In a series of six studies, Rimé et al. (1991) asked subjects to recall and describe either emotional events (generally), events that elicited specific emotions (e.g., shame and anger), or specific emotional experiences pre-selected by the researchers (e.g., death of a close family member and important personal failure). The participants were presented with a social sharing questionnaire that asked, among other things, whether they had shared the information with others and, if so, how soon after the event they did so. Ninety percent of study participants reportedly shared emotional experiences after they occurred, more than half of the time (53–58% across studies) on the same day as the occurrence. The authors also found that the likelihood of disclosing to others was positively correlated with the disruptiveness of the event (Rimé et al., 1991). This is consistent with the "fever model" of disclosure (Stiles, 1987), according to which the relationship between psychological distress and disclosure is analogous to that between physical infection and fever: Disclosure and fever serve

both as indicators of an underlying problem and as part of a restorative process, and the level of both increases with the degree of distress (Stiles, 1987).[5]

Some have argued that the relationship between the need to disclose and the emotionality of the catalyzing event is best described as a step, rather than linear, function—that is, that a critical threshold of emotional intensity must be exceeded in order for social sharing to occur (Luminet et al., 2000; Rimé et al., 1992, 1998). However, research suggests that this threshold is relatively low—that the need to share emotions with others can be generated by relatively moderate emotion-inducing events, such as exposure to an emotional film clip. For example, Luminet et al. (2000) showed participants one of three possible movie excerpts: a non-emotional, moderately emotional, or intensely emotional clip. The participants were either recorded when they rejoined a friend who had accompanied them to the laboratory (Studies 1 and 2) or were asked to complete a follow-up questionnaire 2 days after their experimental session (Study 3). Those who saw the intense emotional clip engaged in significantly more social sharing of emotion with a friend in the lab (Studies 1 and 2) or in the days following the experiment (Study 3), compared to both the moderate and non-emotional treatment conditions, which did not differ significantly from one another.

Beyond communicating one's own response to an emotional experience, research has demonstrated that individuals are more likely to share emotion-eliciting content itself. Heath et al. (2001) found that the ideas that propagate in the social environment (i.e., "memes") are those that have survived a selection process based on their ability to evoke specific emotions consistently across individuals. Based on the frequency with which certain urban legends are featured online as well as individuals' self-reported likelihood to pass along various urban legends, the authors observed the counter-intuitive result that stories are more likely to be shared with others if they evoke greater levels of disgust. Berger and Milkman (2012) similarly found that the degree to which content arouses emotion is highly predictive of whether a newspaper article will "go viral." Analyzing a sample of nearly 7000 *New York Times* articles, the authors investigated the extent to which emotionality, valence, and specific emotions such as anger or sadness impact the likelihood that an article ends up on the *New York Times's* most e-mailed list, a report continually updated to include those articles most frequently shared with others over the past 24 h. They then conducted a series of lab experiments in which the participants read articles that elicited either high or low levels of specific emotions, namely, amusement, anger, and sadness (Studies 2a, 2b, and 3, respectively). Controlling for various article features, content evoking more anxiety or anger was found to be more viral. This study established an important connection between emotion and physical arousal in triggering a disclosing response. Study participants reported being more likely to share content that evoked high levels of emotions such as anger or awe, whereas the reverse was true for high levels of sadness, controlling for how surprising, interesting, or practically useful content is. The effect was mediated by self-reported level of arousal: the more arousing the reading experience, the higher one's likelihood to share the content with others.

Perhaps the most compelling evidence for the emotion-arousal-disclosure link comes from Berger (2011), who demonstrated that even incidental emotion and arousal can influence disclosing behavior. In his first experiment, study participants watched either a high- (amusing or anxiety-producing) or low-arousal film clip, after which, in an ostensibly separate study, they were shown an unemotional article and video. Participants reported a higher willingness to share the unemotional content in this second stage when they had been exposed to more emotionally arousing content earlier in the experiment. Perhaps more striking are the results from Experiment 2, in which the study participants either jogged lightly in place or sat still for 60 s, after which they read a neutral news article that they could email to whomever they wished. The participants in the jogging condition shared the article at a significantly higher rate than those who remained sedentary in the first part of the study, suggesting that physical arousal in the absence of an emotional experience can catalyze a need to share unrelated information with others. It is difficult to reconcile the existence of disclosures driven exclusively by pure physical arousal with the deliberative perspective that all disclosures involve a rational calculation of the costs, benefits, and likely outcomes of disclosing.

3.4 | Evolutionary basis

Humans—and seemingly only humans—have evolved specific cognitive systems dedicated to the transmission of cultural knowledge between individuals (Csibra & Gergely, 2011). This transmission is common to all societies and even precedes the acquisition of language; for instance, infants as young as 9 months of age attempt to draw others' attention to what they perceive to be important features of their environment (Tomasello, 1999). Additionally, verbal communication has a neurochemical basis: Oxytocin is found both to increase in response to verbal contact with a loved one (e.g., infants in response to their mother's voice; Seltzer et al., 2010) and also to increase one's willingness to share event-related emotions (Lane et al., 2013).

A key feature distinguishing drives from other states that influence behavior and motivate action is that drives serve adaptive functions. Hunger, for example, evolved to assure nutritional sufficiency, and pain to motivate organisms to avoid physical harm. The adaptive functions of the desire to disclose are probably social. It has been argued that a powerful motivation to achieve and maintain self-esteem evolved so that people would internalize the need to be liked and respected by other people, key for survival and reproduction (Leary & Baumeister, 2000). Analogously, perhaps, the desire to disclose evolved to aid in social coordination and in the dissemination of important information to members of the species. Indeed, social communication has proven evolutionarily advantageous, enabling the acquisition of knowledge and skills necessary for survival in diverse habitats (Pagel & Mace, 2004). The Emotional Broadcaster Theory (EBT; Harber & Cohen, 2005) argues that the desire to share emotionally arousing information can provide a social benefit, albeit as an

unintended externality: Individuals pursuing the fulfillment of their own "intrapsychic needs" ultimately broadcast psychologically important information to their social networks. The literature on gossip similarly maintains that the "exchange of information about absent third parties" (Foster, 2004, p. 81) serves the interests of the group (Gluckman, 1963), although in some cases at the expense of the individual (Paine, 1967). According to this interpretation, gossip came about as a means of providing the information necessary for social comparison processes (Wert & Salovey, 2004) and serves to teach social norms in a narrative form (i.e., how the violation of norms led to others' misfortune; Baumeister et al., 2004). Gossip can also constrain self-serving behavior that would otherwise harm the collective interest. An empirical example comes from Beersma and Van Kleef (2011), where participants took part in a modified dictator game in which they were endowed with 100 lottery tickets to be distributed between one's own "personal account" and a group account (to be split evenly between the participant and three other group members). Experimental subjects contributed more to the group account when they were led to believe that their decisions were identifiable (i.e., group members would know how many tickets the participant kept for himself or herself), but only when this manipulation was combined with the belief that group members tended to gossip (according to self-reports).

Given the social basis for our evolved desire to disclose thoughts and experiences to others, it is perhaps not surprising that substantial evidence has emerged of social benefits accrued from disclosure, such as building trust and prosocial orientation toward the listener (Reis et al., 2010). In social penetration research, Altman and Taylor (1973) view the act of sharing one's thoughts and feelings with another person as a type of intimacy critical to the development and progression of relationships. Intimate sharing of any kind—that is, regardless of valence—can increase the discloser's likeability and improve social relationships (for a review, see Collins & Miller, 1994) as well as attitudes toward out-group members (Miller, 2002). It is worth noting that the relationship between self-disclosure and liking is U-shaped: Liking is highest for those who disclose a moderate amount, and lowest for those who disclose either very little or too much (Cozby, 1973). For these reasons, some have stressed that it is not self-disclosure, per se, but rather disclosure flexibility—that is, the ability to modulate disclosure in response to situational and interpersonal demands—that is critical to positive outcomes from disclosing (Chelune, 1977).

3.5 | Deprivation and satiation

The evolutionary basis of the desire to disclose is further supported by an extensive body of research over several decades establishing that disclosure is an integral part of emotional processing (Zech et al., 2004) and is necessary for healthy functioning. Low levels of self-disclosure are associated with health problems, such as stress and loneliness (Finkenauer et al., 2002). Moreover, the relationship between loneliness and (the lack of) disclosure may be moderated by

whether or not disclosures that do occur sufficiently reveal to others internal aspects of the self, such as negative experiences (Matsushima & Shiomi, 2001). Emotional inhibition, defined as the withholding of emotional expression, is positively correlated with rumination (King et al., 1992), and even brief episodes of expressive suppression in conversation can have negative physiological effects for both disclosers and their conversational partners. For example, Butler et al. (2003) showed an emotionally evocative film to female study participants who then conversed with a partner. One member of each dyad had been instructed either to respond naturally or to regulate her emotions during the conversation via cognitive reappraisal or through suppression of emotional behavior. Expressive suppression was found not only to reduce rapport and inhibit relationship formation between experimental participants but also to increase blood pressure levels in both conversational partners.

Research on "self-concealment" also provides a link between disclosure and mental health. Self-concealment involves protracted secrecy (Maas et al., 2019) and "a predisposition to actively conceal from others personal information that one perceives as distressing or negative" (Larson & Chastain, 1990, p. 440). Based on responses to a battery of items on self-disclosure, social network and support, and psychological and physical symptoms, Larson and Chastain (1990) found that self-concealment is associated with higher levels of depression and anxiety, as well as more physical symptoms for individuals who have experienced high levels of trauma.

Research demonstrating the detrimental psychological impact of low self-disclosure and high self-concealment is complemented by an even more extensive scholarship around the psychological and physiological benefits of disclosure, particularly of emotionally troubling thoughts and experiences. For instance, disclosure has been found to reduce intrusive thoughts (Lepore et al., 2000) and free up cognitive resources (Klein & Boals, 2001). It is associated with improved immune functioning (Booth et al., 1997) and reduced physical symptoms associated with traumatic events (Greenberg & Stone, 1992). The role of self-disclosure in emotional release has been experimentally documented in clinical research, in which research participants typically are instructed to write an essay expressing their feelings about either a traumatic life experience (treatment condition) or an unemotional topic (control; Pennebaker & Beall, 1986). In countless experiments over several decades, the participants in the treatment group have exhibited improved psychological and physical health and overall functioning relative to the control group. This writing task has been implemented with success across modalities, such as e-mail or web-based applications (Lange et al., 2002; Sheese et al., 2004), and the effect has been observed even in participants who wrote about an emotional topic for only 2 min once a day for 2 days (Burton & King, 2008). (For a review, see Frattaroli, 2006.)

Taken together, this evidence suggests that being deprived of the opportunity to disclose one's thoughts, feelings, experiences, etc. with others is not only an aversive state but can also, if prolonged, disrupt healthy functioning. At the same time, availing oneself of an outlet to disclose can serve a restorative function, alleviating stress and improving physical health (Frattaroli, 2006). As further evidence of the drive-

like nature of disclosure, there are empirical findings (albeit limited) to suggest that the drive to disclose is aimed at satiation and can intensify if not satisfied—a feature that has previously been associated with drive states (Loewenstein, 1994, 1996). Unpublished data by Harber (2004, as cited in Harber & Cohen, 2005) revealed that initial disclosures reduced the desire for additional disclosures: Study participants were shown a gruesome film clip, given an opportunity either to disclose their thoughts and feelings about the scene (treatment) or merely describe the scene factually (control), then asked not to discuss the clip with anyone until returning to the lab in 6 weeks' time. The participants in the treatment group reportedly experienced less temptation to violate, and were more likely to comply with, these instructions (Harber, 2004).

3.6 | Hedonic value

Consistent with its hypothesized social evolutionary origins, the drive to disclose has developed a motivational force independent of any immediate, direct, and social utility. For positive events, expressive displays such as celebrating or communicating to others are associated with positive affect above and beyond the benefits arising from the event itself, a phenomenon known as "capitalization" (Gable et al., 2018; Lambert et al., 2013; Langston, 1994). Research suggests that individuals engage in (costly) sharing absent any social, or other plausible, motives. For instance, study participants in Tamir et al. (2015) were partnered for an experimental task in which one participant—assigned to the "learner" role—attempted to guess which card of four correctly completed a sequence, whereas the "teacher" participant received the correct answer and an opportunity to communicate the information to his or her partner. Experimental participants were willing to forgo money in order to inform their partners of the correct selections, even when doing so had no impact on the earnings of their partner or on their own reputation (i.e., the participants were not told that the information was provided by their partner). This suggests that (anonymously) disclosing (impersonal and economically useless) information confers some utility upon the discloser. Other evidence of the seeming inherent pleasure derived from disclosing comes from recent empirical research utilizing functional magnetic resonance imaging (fMRI). In a follow-up study in the above described paper (Tamir et al., 2015), participants were instructed by the researchers, on each trial, either to inform their partners of the correct answer or withhold that information, and in either case did not observe their partner's guess. Even in this sterile setting—without an active choice and without knowledge of the partner's outcome—disclosing information activated brain regions associated with reward. Similarly, the participants in Baek et al. (2017) exhibited significantly greater activity in areas of the brain associated with positive valuation when thinking about sharing a *New York Times* article with others, compared to those asked to think about reading the same article on their own.

There is also evidence that disclosing can confer psychological benefits even in the absence of a salient target. In her meta-analysis of 146 studies, Frattaroli (2006) not only confirmed the robust health

and psychological benefits of disclosing in the Pennebaker-style writing task but also observed that experimental participants experienced psychological health benefits even when they did *not* submit their disclosure to the experimenter and could thus anticipate that no one would read or hear its content. Although this finding may be confounded with the location of the experiment,[6] it is consistent with there being a therapeutic impact of the act of putting thoughts and feelings into words, as in journaling or diary keeping (Hemenover, 2003). It supports the conclusion that the benefits of disclosure accrue not only from conveying the information but also from satisfying the need (for transmission purposes) to translate an event into language, which enhances the experiencer's ability to understand, assimilate, and ultimately cope with the experience (Shaw et al., 2006).

Taken together, this research suggests that sharing thoughts and information is inherently valuable, and confers a psychological benefit on those who share, irrespective of the type of information, whether it achieves an instrumental purpose and indeed whether it is even received by another party. Furthermore, it calls into question the wisdom behind casting disclosure strictly as an interpersonal rather than intrapersonal behavior (e.g., Joinson & Paine, 2007), one that needs to be "brought off" in an interaction and examined within the specific interactional context and consequences (Antaki et al., 2005, p. 181). Although much disclosing behavior may be inherently interpersonal, some might instead involve largely intrapsychic motivations.

3.7 | Impulsive disclosure

Most drives—for example, hunger and the sex drive—are associated with problems of self-control that arise in situations in which deliberations conflict with the impetus of the drive (Loewenstein et al., 2015). If disclosure is, in fact, a drive, we should expect to see impulsive behavior that evokes self-control, and, in cases where self-control is wanting, the result should be action that is later regretted. Anecdotal examples of regrettable disclosures abound, and social media have enabled empirical research on the subject. To quantify the degree of impulsive disclosing in the social network space, Simo and Kreutzer (2022) collected a corpus of nearly 5 million regrettable posts and comments on 30 different popular social media platforms over a 9-month period. A separate study, focusing only on a single social media site (Twitter), found that, of a sample of 544,683 tweets retrieved from 2017, one-quarter contained information that their system identified as sensitive and likely to be regretted, an incredible amount given the 140-character limit per tweet at the time (Geetha et al., 2022). Using a different approach, Wang et al. (2011) surveyed Facebook users and explicitly asked about their experience on the site. Twenty one percent of respondents reported posting something to Facebook that they later regretted. According to respondents, many of these disclosures were made in a "hot" state or under the influence of alcohol or drugs, a behavior the authors attribute to the impulsiveness of sharing, which may "blind users to the negative outcomes of posts even if the outcome is immediate" (Wang et al., 2011, p. 10).

Regret is one indicator of impulsive behavior. Another is timing. In our work on confessions (Carbone et al., 2022), we survey individuals who posted anonymous confessions to Reddit and ask how long they experienced a desire to share this information with others prior to posting it online. Across two studies, 43% of the total sample ($N = 402$) indicated that they confessed online immediately after the catalyzing event. We find a similar result for disclosing generally, rather than online disclosure specifically. In preliminary, unpublished work, we asked the participants whether or not they recalled ever having a strong desire to share information with another person. If so, we explicitly asked them if they could think of a time when this desire to share felt impulsive (i.e., "you weren't thinking about how you might benefit from sharing the information, but just experienced an unreflective urge to do so") and a time when it felt deliberate (i.e., "you consciously thought about your desire and/or considered the possible consequences of sharing the information with another person"). Sixty eight percent of those surveyed indicated that they had experienced what felt like an impulsive desire to disclose. Consistent with the research discussed in Section 2.3, the timing of these disclosures was, again, instantaneous: 51% indicated that they told others immediately after experiencing the desire to do so (vs. 35% for deliberate disclosures). The immediacy of many disclosures suggests that disclosing is, at least in some instances, driven by transient motivational factors as opposed to more stable evaluations of costs and benefits. Additionally, results from this study offer both support for the underlying emotional mechanism as well as the relationship between impulsive sharing and regret: Using a 10-point scale, the participants reported that their recalled impulsive disclosures were significantly more emotional and ultimately regrettable than their recalled deliberate disclosures (6.42 vs. 5.70, $p = .015$, and 1.24 vs. 0.20, $p < .001$, respectively).

If, rather than being driven by impulse, disclosure were instead always the result of a simple calculation of costs and benefits, regretted acts of disclosing (or withholding) would occur only when people miscalculate the costs and benefits in a specific context. We should therefore not expect to observe any systematic divergences in either direction. However, in our own research, we find that a sizeable portion of individuals report that they tend either to over- or under-disclose: When asked to indicate where they fall on a scale from -5 ("Don't share thoughts and feelings when I probably should") to 5 ("Share thoughts and feelings when I probably should not"), the result is a bi-modal distribution, with the bulk of respondents falling on either side of zero and only 2% indicating that they feel they disclose information an appropriate amount (Carbone et al., 2022; histogram presented in Appendix A). These results cannot be reconciled with a fully rational model of human behavior: Individuals are either systematically biased in their evaluation of costs and benefits across contexts, or, more likely, disclosure can be an act of impulse and there are individual differences in the susceptibility to impulsive forces. Indeed, research suggests that the tendency to disclose is increasing in impulsivity, as measured by personality scales (Aivazpour & Rao, 2020; Kipnis & Goodstadt, 1970).

The evidence presented in this section depicts a visceral drive to disclose, activated by a state of physical arousal and satiated by the act of disclosing, which helps to regulate normal physiological and psychological functioning and can be inherently pleasurable. Once the drive evolved, it may have come to operate semi-autonomously, driving self-disclosure in the absence of proximate assessments of costs and benefits. It is difficult to say whether this response pattern is innate, arises through social learning, or is rather learned and reinforced through the cathartic act of disclosing. What is clear, however, is that conceptualizing disclosure as purely the outcome of a cost–benefit analysis does a disservice to the fundamental role of disclosure in the human experience.

4 | DUAL-PROCESS MODEL OF DISCLOSURE

The above evidence demands a reconsideration of the prevailing view that disclosure is the product of a rational cost–benefit analysis. We argue that adopting a dual-process framework can account for the aforementioned deviations from rational disclosing behavior while simultaneously retaining prescriptive models for their utility in describing how individuals do, at other times, consciously navigate the sometimes-perilous disclosure decision-making process.

Dual-process models distinguish between two types of cognitive operations, motivations, or processes. For our purposes, we will rely on the model proposed by Loewenstein et al. (2015) in which behavior is determined by the interaction between what the authors term *deliberative* and *affective* processes/systems. The former assesses different options in a consequentialist, goal-based manner and is responsible for self-regulation and self-control. This type of decision making is captured by the predominant perspective on disclosure, and indeed much disclosing behavior falls into this category. At the same time, behavior can also be dictated by the latter system, which involves reflexive, automatic, unconscious responses driven by emotions and motivational and drive states. The authors note that the affective system likely has primacy and default control over behavior, but the deliberative system can exert influence over decision making. Thus, behavior is guided by the interplay between these two processes.

Note that this model does not imply that affective influences impact behavior *only* in a nondeliberative fashion—only that people often have little or no control over their affective reactions to situations. On the impulsive side, for example, an individual might experience guilt about something they did and impulsively disclose the action, and their guilt about it. But an individual could also think it through deliberatively and decide to disclose in order to assuage their guilt. In both cases, there is an affective influence, but the response can be either impulsive or deliberative.

The two systems can have similar or divergent motivational tendencies, and the model offers predictions for when the two systems are likely to diverge. First, overriding affective motivations requires an inner exertion of effort, or *willpower*, which is in short supply in the short run (Baumeister & Vohs, 2003). As a result, factors that reduce the availability of willpower and cognitive resources will decrease deliberative interference and increase the likelihood of an affectively

motivated response. Such factors include a depletion of willpower from recent use or competing demands on the deliberative system (called *cognitive load*). Second, features of the environment can strengthen affective motivations, such as proximity (both temporal and nontemporal) of a reward or cost associated with the behavior, as well as experiential vividness. The deliberative system's ability to override the affective system and implement subsequent desired behaviors is decreasing in cost/reward proximity and vividness, and in such cases, the resulting behavior will be closer to what the authors call the "affective optimum" (Loewenstein et al., 2015).

According to this model, when individuals are in a cold, unemotional state with ample cognitive resources, decisions to disclose should be largely determined by deliberations about the likely costs and benefits of disclosure. Under such circumstances, existing models of disclosure may be descriptively accurate. Unlike prior models, however, this dual-process framework can also explain instances in which disclosure is rapid and uncontrolled or in which attempts at self-control fail, similar to failures of self-control associated with drive states such as hunger or sexual arousal. The same can be said of occasions in which self-regulatory faculties are lacking: Because disclosure can be inherently pleasurable, when one's deliberative system is occupied with another, unrelated task, the ability to consider the risks of disclosure is undermined and behavior would default to the hedonic experience of disclosing.

5 | IMPLICATIONS FOR CONSUMER PSYCHOLOGY

Understanding the drive-like features of disclosure and developing a more complete model of disclosing behavior is crucial for all fields of psychology, and particularly the study of consumer behavior, where the implications of disclosure extend beyond the individual to brands and companies as well. Research suggests that WOM disclosures constitute a nontrivial portion of interpersonal communication. For instance, in an analysis of over 150,000 Twitter posts, Jansen et al. (2009) found that approximately 19% of tweets included some mention of a brand or corporation. Such communications are extremely influential: According to a Nielsen's report, 92% of consumers trust recommendations from friends and family over all forms of advertising, and only 58% reportedly trust the messages found on company websites (Nielsen, 2012).

It is therefore not surprising that researchers and marketers alike have sought to understand the factors that lead customers to discuss their consumption experiences. As in other disciplines, this endeavor has largely assumed that WOM disclosures are preceded by a cost–benefit analysis. For instance, Eisingerich et al. (2015) asked study participants to name one of their favorite brands and then indicate their willingness to recommend the brand to relatives and friends both in person and on online social sites, as well as their perceived social risk (i.e., expected disapproval and embarrassment) associated with both WOM contexts. The authors found that individuals were less likely to offer electronic WOM (eWOM) on social sites compared to

face-to-face, because of the higher perceived social risk associated with the former. On the benefit side, WOM can be an opportunity for self-expression and to signal one's tastes, as was the case among study respondents who reportedly "liked" a brand on Facebook and provided ratings across brand love, brand advocacy, and self-expressive brand measures (e.g., Wallace et al., 2014). More altruistically, WOM can be motivated by the desire to aid other consumers in making satisfying purchase decisions, according to a study in which individuals were intercepted at a variety of business establishments and asked to recall recent instances in which they spoke about a product with a non-family member and detail what they shared and why (Sundaram et al., 1998). But the account in the present paper suggests that WOM may also be driven by the need for emotional release, perhaps following an arousing consumption experience. Indeed, this is consistent with research suggesting that the propensity to generate WOM is a slightly asymmetric U-shaped function of customer satisfaction: highest at the two extremes but slightly higher for dissatisfied than for satisfied customers (Anderson, 1998).

Additionally, the present work makes a more theoretical contribution by offering a way to integrate ostensibly disparate research traditions into a single, unified view. Up to now, the study of disclosure has tended to be demarcated in part by the types of disclosure of interest to a specific discipline. Social and clinical psychologists, for example, are primarily interested in the revelation of intimate, private information such as one's feelings and experiences (i.e., self-disclosures). Privacy researchers are concerned largely with individuals' propensity to share personal information, whether indirectly, through behaviors such as using a trackable smart phone, or directly, through behaviors such as posting embarrassing or potentially incriminating information on social media. Marketing researchers, on the other hand, are unique in their focus on content that is typically not sensitive, such as WOM. Additionally, marketing research studies not only the *generation* of WOM (i.e., one's own brand- or product-related experiences) but also the *transmission* of WOM (i.e., sharing information about the experiences of others; De Angelis et al., 2012). From a practical point of view, these distinctions between different types of disclosure can be important, even as social media and digital marketing blur the line between social and commercial disclosures (for a discussion, see Kim et al., 2021). But, from a psychological and behavioral perspective, when the goal is to understand engagement in disclosure and the psychosocial and material consequences thereof, this distinction is somewhat arbitrary.

Self-disclosure is conventionally understood to mean "making the self known to others" (Jourard & Lasakow, 1958, p. 91) via "any information exchange that refers to the self, including personal states, dispositions, events in the past, and plans for the future" (Derlega & Grzelak, 1979, p. 152). But making oneself known can assume manifold forms. Much can be communicated through nonverbal means, such as facial expression and intonation (Hill et al., 1981) or through outward displays of identity such as clothing or tattoos and piercings (Guy & Banim, 2000; Irwin, 2001). This is increasingly true as individuals conduct more of their social lives online, particularly through the posting of photographs and videos on social media. In terms of verbal or written

communication, as touched upon in the introduction, the sharing even of impersonal (i.e., non-self-referential) information does, more often than not, reveal information about oneself. Posting an online product review can reveal information about one's preferences and consumption patterns. Expressing a project idea to a group of colleagues can reveal information about one's intelligence, creativity, and thought processes. Relaying information about a third party's experience with a product or company can reveal information about one's own disposition and social connectivity, perhaps giving the impression that one is "in the know." It is often unclear what should be treated conceptually as an act of disclosure.

The dual-process model proposed herein provides an alternative to this siloed approach to the study of disclosure and holds that the same psychological processes can underlie nearly all instances of information sharing, irrespective of the specific content. Humans are hardwired to share information, and disclosing behavior can be deliberate and calculated or visceral and impulsive. Although the latter immediately calls to mind the sharing of, say, narrative information, such as an emotional event or juicy gossip, even seemingly dry biographic data (i.e., peripheral data; Altman & Taylor, 1973) can inspire an intense desire to disclose under the right circumstances. For instance, you might feel apathetic about sharing your childhood address until a chance encounter with someone who grew up in a neighboring town. Rather than focusing only on the disclosure of explicitly self-relevant information, as in the social psychology literature, or treating information about the self separately from expressions of inner desires, etc., as is done in the privacy literature (Joinson & Paine, 2007), a dual-process framework allows for the comprehensive study of disclosing behavior, broadly defined.

6 | CONCLUSIONS AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS

The literature on disclosure is vast, reflecting the integral role that self-expression and interpersonal communication play in our daily lives. Despite its importance, however, the extant literature has not fully appreciated the fundamental, drive-like nature of disclosing behavior. Models of disclosure begin with situational cues and motives, which together are said to predict when and how different individuals disclose to achieve their goals in different situations. This perspective is applicable to some but not all instances of disclosure. At other times, disclosure is a basic, at times visceral, psychological drive to share information, independent of any consideration of the strategic utility or costs and risks of such an action. In the same way that biological drives, emotions, and motivational feeling states like physical or emotional pain, and hunger can drive people to engage in behaviors that they themselves perceive to be misaligned with other goals, the drive to disclose can potentially lead to oversharing and engender negative consequences as a result.

Disclosure is not only an important but also a fascinating behavior, worthy of investigation, and the above review has highlighted several areas ripe for research. Although research is unlikely to determine whether there exists a primary drive to disclose or whether disclosure is derivative of another more basic drive, further evidence can be sought to document the existence of drive-like, impulsive disclosure. The most promising avenue may lie in manipulations that change "processing potential" (Kruglanski & Gigerenzer, 2011), such as inducing cognitive load, depleting self-control, or observing the impact of alcohol consumption on disclosing behavior. Along the same lines, exploring informational features that are particularly evocative of a visceral need to disclose would be a fruitful line of research. Other questions relate to deprivation and satiation, key indicators of drive state. One can easily conjure up an account of someone who, after isolation or simply not conversing with others for some time (i.e., a state of deprivation), is more prone to (over-)share when the opportunity presents itself. To our knowledge, however, no such empirical evidence exists. A final question is whether satiation of the desire to disclose is behavior specific: Given that the desire to disclose can be brought on by physical arousal, can it be satisfied through other non-disclosing action (e.g., physical activity)?

Until now, the voluminous empirical and theoretical literature dealing with disclosure has largely focused on acts of deliberate, strategic disclosure. We propose that a dual-process framework can encompass the insights of this literature while also accommodating the important and common occurrence of disclosures that appear to be influenced by a drive-like motivational force. Such a dual-process perspective can, we believe, unify research across several disciplines and advance our understanding of this critically important human behavior.

ORCID

Erin Carbone https://orcid.org/0000-0002-1714-7661

ENDNOTE

[1] One exception is privacy research that investigates the passive sharing of personal data, for example, through the third-party sale of purchasing history or the collection of geolocation data from electronic devices. (For a discussion, see Joinson & Paine, 2007; Kim et al., 2021.)

[2] The arguments herein are not relevant to disclosures made exclusively, or primarily, through coercive means (e.g., coerced confessions and prying).

[3] Some privacy research (e.g., Acquisti & Grossklags, 2005) does argue that the rational behavior implied by the privacy calculus is unrealistic in light of common biases and heuristics, such as hyperbolic discounting, optimism bias, and the affect heuristic. However, even models that take psychological distortions into account (e.g., Acquisti, 2004) assume that disclosing behavior results from deliberation, albeit insufficient or biased.

[4] Omarzu (2000) notes that Stages 1 and 2 of the DDM are likely (to some degree) automatic and unconscious, whereas Stage 3 must contain at least some controlled processes. This distinction between automatic and controlled processes is, of course, different from the affective-deliberate distinction we make later in the paper.

[5] The "fever model" and the work of Rimé and his colleagues are closest to our perspective in their recognition of the visceral need to disclose and the link between emotion and disclosure. However, this work is positioned in the clinical realm and does not present a formal theoretical perspective.

[6] The participants who were not required to turn in their disclosures were also more likely to have disclosed at home as opposed to in a laboratory.

REFERENCES

Acquisti, A. (2004, May). Privacy in electronic commerce and the economics of immediate gratification. In *Proceedings of the 5th ACM conference on Electronic commerce* (pp. 21-29). https://doi.org/10.1145/988772.988777

Acquisti, A., Brandimarte, L., & Loewenstein, G. (2015). Privacy and human behavior in the age of information. *Science*, *347*(6221), 509–514. https://doi.org/10.1126/science.aaa1465

Acquisti, A., & Grossklags, J. (2005). Privacy and rationality in individual decision making. *IEEE Security and Privacy*, *3*(1), 26–33. https://doi.org/10.1109/MSP.2005.22

Afifi, T., & Steuber, K. (2009). The revelation risk model (RRM): Factors that predict the revelation of secrets and the strategies used to reveal them. *Communication Monographs*, *76*(2), 144–176. https://doi.org/10.1080/03637750902828412

Aivazpour, Z., & Rao, V. S. (2020). Information disclosure and privacy paradox: The role of impulsivity. *ACM SIGMIS Database: The DATABASE for Advances in Information Systems*, *51*(1), 14–36. https://doi.org/10.1145/3380799.3380803

Al-Daraiseh, A. A., Al-Joudi, A. S., Al-Gahtani, H. B., & Al-Qahtani, M. S. (2014). Social networks' benefits, privacy, and identity theft: KSA case study. *International Journal of Advanced Computer Science and Applications*, *5*(12), 129–143. https://doi.org/10.14569/IJACSA.2014.051218

Alexandrov, A., Lilly, B., & Babakus, E. (2013). The effects of social-and self-motives on the intentions to share positive and negative word of mouth. *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, *41*(5), 531–546. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11747-012-0323-4

Altman, I., & Taylor, D. A. (1973). *Social penetration: The development of interpersonal relationships*. Holt, Rinehart & Winston.

Anderson, E. W. (1998). Customer satisfaction and word of mouth. *Journal of Service Research*, *1*(1), 5–17. https://doi.org/10.1177/109467059800100102

Andrade, E. B., Kaltcheva, V., & Weitz, B. (2002). Self-disclosure on the web: The impact of privacy policy, reward, and company reputation. In S. M. Broniarczyk & K. Nakamoto (Eds.). *NA - Advances in consumer research*, *29* (pp. 350–353). Association for Consumer Research. https://www.acrwebsite.org/volumes/8674/volumes/v29/NA-29

Antaki, C., Barnes, R., & Leudar, I. (2005). Self-disclosure as a situated interactional practice. *British Journal of Social Psychology*, *44*(2), 181–199. https://doi.org/10.1348/014466604X15733

Baek, E. C., Scholz, C., O'Donnell, M. B., & Falk, E. B. (2017). The value of sharing information: A neural account of information transmission. *Psychological Science*, *28*(7), 851–861. https://doi.org/10.1177/0956797617695073

Baumeister, R. F., & Vohs, K. D. (2003). Willpower, choice, and self-control. In G. Loewenstein, D. Read, & R. F. Baumeister (Eds.). *Time and decision: Economic and psychological perspectives on intertemporal choice* (pp. 201–216). Russell Sage Foundation.

Baumeister, R. F., Zhang, L., & Vohs, K. D. (2004). Gossip as cultural learning. *Review of General Psychology*, *8*(2), 111–121. https://doi.org/10.1037/1089-2680.8.2.111

Baxter, L. A., & Montgomery, B. M. (1996). *Relating: Dialogues and dialectics*. Guilford.

Beersma, B., & Van Kleef, G. A. (2011). How the grapevine keeps you in line: Gossip increases contributions to the group. *Social Psychological and Personality Science*, *2*(6), 642–649. https://doi.org/10.1177/1948550611405073

Berger, J. (2011). Arousal increases social transmission of information. *Psychological Science*, *22*(7), 891–893. https://doi.org/10.1177/0956797611413294

Berger, J. (2014). Word of mouth and interpersonal communication: A review and directions for future research. *Journal of Consumer Psychology*, *24*(4), 586–607. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jcps.2014.05.002

Berger, J., & Heath, C. (2007). Where consumers diverge from others: Identity signaling and product domains. *Journal of Consumer Research*, *34*(2), 121–134. https://doi.org/10.1086/519142

Berger, J., & Milkman, K. L. (2012). What makes online content viral? *Journal of Marketing Research*, *49*(2), 192–205. https://doi.org/10.1509/jmr.10.0353

Berger, J., & Schwartz, E. M. (2011). What drives immediate and ongoing word of mouth? *Journal of Marketing Research*, *48*(5), 869–880. https://doi.org/10.1509/jmkr.48.5.869

Bhatia, S., & Loewenstein, G. (2022). Drive states. In R. Biswas-Diener & E. Diener (Eds.). *Noba textbook series: Psychology*. DEF publishers. Retrieved from http://noba.to/pjwkbt5h

Booth, R. J., Petrie, K. J., & Pennebaker, J. W. (1997). Changes in circulating lymphocyte numbers following emotional disclosure: Evidence of buffering? *Stress Medicine*, *13*(1), 23–29. https://doi.org/10.1002/(SICI)1099-1700(199701)13:1<23::AID-SMI714>3.0.CO;2-E

Borkman, T. (1999). *Understanding self-help/mutual aid: Experiential learning in the commons*. Rutgers University Press.

Burton, C. M., & King, L. A. (2008). Effects of (very) brief writing on health: The two-minute miracle. *British Journal of Health Psychology*, *13*(1), 9–14. https://doi.org/10.1348/135910707X250910

Butler, E. A., Egloff, B., Wilhelm, F. H., Smith, N. C., Erickson, E. A., & Gross, J. J. (2003). The social consequences of expressive suppression. *Emotion*, *3*, 48–67. https://doi.org/10.1037/1528-3542.3.1.48

Carbone, E. & Loewenstein, G. (2020). Dying to divulge: The determinants of, and relationship between, desired and actual disclosure. Available at SSRN: https://doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.3613232

Carbone, E., Loewenstein, G., & Fan, A. (2022). *The positive emotional consequences of anonymous online disclosure*. [Unpublished manuscript].

Chaikin, A. L., & Derlega, V. J. (1974). Liking for the norm-breaker in self-disclosure. *Journal of Personality*, *42*, 117–129. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-6494.1974.tb00560.x

Chaudoir, S. R., & Fisher, J. D. (2010). The disclosure processes model: Understanding disclosure decision making and post disclosure outcomes among people living with a concealable stigmatized identity. *Psychological Bulletin*, *136*, 236–256. https://doi.org/10.1037/a0018193

Chelune, G. J. (1977). Disclosure flexibility and social-situational perceptions. *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology*, *45*(6), 1139–1143. https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-006X.45.6.1139

Chung, C. M., & Darke, P. R. (2006). The consumer as advocate: Self-relevance, culture, and word-of-mouth. *Marketing Letters*, *17*(4), 269–279. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11002-006-8426-7

Collins, N. L., & Miller, L. C. (1994). Self-disclosure and liking: A meta-analytic review. *Psychological Bulletin*, *116*(3), 457–475. https://doi.org/10.1037/0033-2909.116.3.457

Cooney, G., Gilbert, D. T., & Wilson, T. D. (2017). The novelty penalty: Why do people like talking about new experiences but hearing about old ones? *Psychological Science*, *28*(3), 380–394. https://doi.org/10.1177/0956797616685870

Corrigan, P. W., Larson, J. E., Hautamaki, J., Matthews, A., Kuwabara, S., Rafacz, J., Walton, J., Wassel, A., & O'Shaughnessy, J. (2009). What lessons do coming out as gay men or lesbians have for people stigmatized by mental illness? *Community Mental Health Journal*, *45*(5), 366–374. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10597-009-9187-6

Cozby, P. C. (1973). Self-disclosure: A literature review. *Psychological Bulletin*, *79*(2), 73–91. https://doi.org/10.1037/h0033950

Csibra, G., & Gergely, G. (2011). Natural pedagogy as evolutionary adaptation. *Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society, B: Biological*

Sciences, 366(1567), 1149–1157. https://doi.org/10.1098/rstb.2010.0319

De Angelis, M., Bonezzi, A., Peluso, A. M., Rucker, D. D., & Costabile, M. (2012). On braggarts and gossips: A self-enhancement account of word-of-mouth generation and transmission. *Journal of Marketing Research*, 49(4), 551–563. https://doi.org/10.1509/jmr.11.0136

Derlega, V. J., & Grzelak, J. (1979). Appropriateness of self-disclosure. In G. J. Chelune (Ed.). *Self-disclosure: Origins, patterns, and implications of openness in interpersonal relationships* (pp. 151–176). Jossey-Bass.

Dinev, T., & Hart, P. (2006). An extended privacy calculus model for e-commerce transactions. *Information Systems Research*, 17(1), 61–80. https://doi.org/10.1287/isre.1060.0080

Eisingerich, A. B., Chun, H. H., Liu, Y., Jia, H., & Bell, S. J. (2015). Why recommend a brand face-to-face but not on Facebook? How word-of-mouth on online social sites differs from traditional word-of-mouth. *Journal of Consumer Psychology*, 25(1), 120–128. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jcps.2014.05.004

Ersland, S., Weisæth, L., & Sund, A. (1989). The stress upon rescuers involved in an oil rig disaster. "Alexander L. Kielland" 1980. *Acta Psychiatrica Scandinavica*, 80, 38–49. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1600-0447.1989.tb05252.x

Farley, S. D. (2011). Is gossip power? The inverse relationships between gossip, power, and likability. *European Journal of Social Psychology*, 41(5), 574–579. https://doi.org/10.1002/ejsp.821

Finkenauer, C., Engels, R. C. M. E., & Meeus, W. (2002). Keeping secrets from parents: Advantages and disadvantages of secrecy in adolescence. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence*, 31, 123–136. https://doi.org/10.1023/A:1014069926507

Foster, E. K. (2004). Research on gossip: Taxonomy, methods, and future directions. *Review of General Psychology*, 8(2), 78–99. https://doi.org/10.1037/1089-2680.8.2.78

Frattaroli, J. (2006). Experimental disclosure and its moderators: A meta-analysis. *Psychological Bulletin*, 132(6), 823–865. https://doi.org/10.1037/0033-2909.132.6.823

Gable, S. L., Reis, H. T., Impett, E. A., & Asher, E. R. (2018). What do you do when things go right? The intrapersonal and interpersonal benefits of sharing positive events. In *Relationships, well-being and behaviour* (pp. 144–182). Routledge.

Geetha, R., Karthika, S., & Kumaraguru, P. (2022). 'Will I regret for this tweet?'—Twitter User's behavior analysis system for private data disclosure. *The Computer Journal*, 65(2), 275–296. https://doi.org/10.1093/comjnl/bxaa027

Gluckman, M. (1963). Papers in honor of Melville J. Herskovits: Gossip and scandal. *Current Anthropology*, 4(3), 307–316. https://doi.org/10.1086/200378

Greenberg, M. A., & Stone, A. A. (1992). Emotional disclosure about traumas and its relation to health: Effects of previous disclosure and trauma severity. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 63(1), 75–84. https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.63.1.75

Greene, K. (2009). An integrated model of health disclosure decision-making. In T. D. Afifi & W. A. Afifi (Eds.). *Uncertainty and information regulation in interpersonal contexts: Theories and applications* (pp. 226–253). Routledge.

Greene, K., Derlega, V. J., & Mathews, A. (2006). Self-disclosure in personal relationships. In A. L. Vangelisti, D. Perlman, A. L. Vangelisti, & D. Perlman (Eds.). *The Cambridge handbook of personal relationships* (pp. 409–427). Cambridge University Press.

Guy, A., & Banim, M. (2000). Personal collections: Women's clothing use and identity. *Journal of Gender Studies*, 9(3), 313–327. https://doi.org/10.1080/713678000

Harber, K. D. (2004). *Impeding disclosure fosters disclosure*. Unpublished raw data.

Harber, K. D., & Cohen, D. J. (2005). The emotional broadcaster theory of social sharing. *Journal of Language and Social Psychology*, 24(4), 382–400. https://doi.org/10.1177/0261927X05281426

Heath, C., Bell, C., & Sternberg, E. (2001). Emotional selection in memes: The case of urban legends. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 81(6), 1028–1041. https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.81.6.1028

Hemenover, S. H. (2003). The good, the bad, and the healthy: Impacts of emotional disclosure of trauma on resilient self-concept and psychological distress. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 29(10), 1236–1244. https://doi.org/10.1177/0146167203255228

Hill, C. E., Siegelman, L., Gronsky, B. R., Sturniolo, F., & Fretz, B. R. (1981). Nonverbal communication and counseling outcome. *Journal of Counseling Psychology*, 28(3), 203–212. https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-0167.28.3.203

Hull, C. L. (1952). *A behavior system*. Yale University Press.

Irwin, K. (2001). Legitimating the first tattoo: Moral passage through informal interaction. *Symbolic Interaction*, 24(1), 49–73. https://doi.org/10.1525/si.2001.24.1.49

James, D., & Drakich, J. (1993). Understanding gender differences in amount of talk: A critical review of research. In D. Tannen (Ed.). *Oxford studies in sociolinguistics. Gender and conversational interaction* (pp. 281–312). Oxford University Press.

Jansen, B. J., Zhang, M., Sobel, K., & Chowdury, A. (2009). Twitter power: Tweets as electronic word of mouth. *Journal of the American Society for Information Science and Technology*, 60(11), 2169–2188. https://doi.org/10.1002/asi.21149

Joinson, A. N., & Paine, C. B. (2007). Self-disclosure, privacy and the Internet. In A. Joinson, K. McKenna, T. Postmes, & U. Reips (Eds.). *The Oxford handbook of internet psychology* (pp. 237–252). Oxford University Press.

Jourard, S. M., & Lasakow, P. (1958). Some factors in self-disclosure. *The Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology*, 56(1), 91–98. https://doi.org/10.1037/h0043357

Kelly, A. E., & McKillop, K. J. (1996). Consequences of revealing personal secrets. *Psychological Bulletin*, 120(3), 450–465. https://doi.org/10.1037/0033-2909.120.3.450

Kim, T., Barasz, K., & John, L. K. (2021). Consumer disclosure. *Consumer. Psychology Review*, 4(1), 59–69. https://doi.org/10.1002/arcp.1065

King, L. A., Emmons, R. A., & Woodley, S. (1992). The structure of inhibition. *Journal of Research in Personality*, 26(1), 85–102. https://doi.org/10.1016/0092-6566(92)90061-8

Kipnis, D., & Goodstadt, B. (1970). Character structure and friendship relationships. *The British Journal of Social and Clinical Psychology*, 9(3), 201–211. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.2044-8260.1970.tb00665.x

Klein, K., & Boals, A. (2001). Expressive writing can increase working memory capacity. *Journal of Experimental Psychology: General*, 130(3), 520–533. https://doi.org/10.1037/0096-3445.130.3.520

Kruglanski, A. W., & Gigerenzer, G. (2011). "Intuitive and deliberate judgments are based on common principles": Correction to Kruglanski and Gigerenzer (2011). *Psychological Review*, 118(1), 97–109. https://doi.org/10.1037/a0023709

Lambert, N. M., Gwinn, A. M., Baumeister, R. F., Strachman, A., Washburn, I. J., Gable, S. L., & Fincham, F. D. (2013). A boost of positive affect: The perks of sharing positive experiences. *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships*, 30(1), 24–43. https://doi.org/10.1177/0265407512449400

Lampel, J., & Bhalla, A. (2007). The role of status seeking in online communities: Giving the gift of experience. *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication*, 12(2), 434–455. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1083-6101.2007.00332.x

Lane, A., Luminet, O., Rimé, B., Gross, J. J., de Timary, P., & Mikolajczak, M. (2013). Oxytocin increases willingness to socially share one's emotions. *International Journal of Psychology*, 48(4), 676–681. https://doi.org/10.1080/00207594.2012.677540

Lange, A., Schoutrop, M., Schrieken, B., & van de Ven, J. P. (2002). Interapy: A model for therapeutic writing on the Internet. In S. J. Lepore & J. M. Smyth (Eds.). *The writing cure: How expressive writing promotes*

health and emotional well-being (pp. 215–237). American Psychological Association.

Langston, C. A. (1994). Capitalizing on and coping with daily-life events: Expressive responses to positive events. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *67*(6), 1112–1125. https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.67.6.1112

Larson, D. G., & Chastain, R. L. (1990). Self-concealment: Conceptualization, measurement, and health implications. *Journal of Social and Clinical Psychology*, *9*(4), 439–455. https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Robert-Chastain/publication/274289977_Self-Concealment_Conceptualization_Measurement_and_Health_Implications/links/55f3185308ae7a10cf88b123/Self-Concealment-Conceptualization-Measurement-and-Health-Implications.pdf, https://doi.org/10.1521/jscp.1990.9.4.439

Laufer, R. S., & Wolfe, M. (1977). Privacy as a concept and a social issue: A multidimensional developmental theory. *Journal of Social Issues*, *33*(3), 22–42. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1540-4560.1977.tb01880.x

Leary, M. R., & Baumeister, R. F. (2000). The nature and function of self-esteem: Sociometer theory. *Advances in Experimental Social Psychology*, *32*, 1–62. https://doi.org/10.1016/S0065-2601(00)80003-9

Lepore, S. J., Ragan, J. D., & Jones, S. (2000). Talking facilitates cognitive–emotional processes of adaptation to an acute stressor. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *78*(3), 499–508. https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.78.3.499

Loewenstein, G. (1994). The psychology of curiosity: A review and reinterpretation. *Psychological Bulletin*, *116*(1), 75–98. https://doi.org/10.1037/0033-2909.116.1.75

Loewenstein, G. (1996). Out of control: Visceral influences on behavior. *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes*, *65*(3), 272–292. https://doi.org/10.1006/obhd.1996.0028

Loewenstein, G., O'Donoghue, T., & Bhatia, S. (2015). Modeling the interplay between affect and deliberation. *Decision*, *2*(2), 55–81. https://doi.org/10.1037/dec0000029

Luminet, O. IV, Bouts, P., Delie, F., Manstead, A. S., & Rimé, B. (2000). Social sharing of emotion following exposure to a negatively valenced situation. *Cognition & Emotion*, *14*(5), 661–688. https://doi.org/10.1080/02699930050117666

Maas, J., Wismeijer, A. A., & Van Assen, M. A. (2019). Associations between secret-keeping and quality of life in older adults. *The International Journal of Aging and Human Development*, *88*(3), 250–265. https://doi.org/10.1177/0091415018758447

Mantouvalou, V. (2019). 'I lost my job over a Facebook post: Was that fair?' Discipline and dismissal for social media activity. *International Journal of Comparative Labour Law and Industrial Relations*, *35*(1), 101–125. https://doi.org/10.54648/ijcl2019005

Matsushima, R., & Shiomi, K. (2001). The effect of hesitancy toward and the motivation for self- disclosure on loneliness among Japanese junior high school students. *Social Behavior and Personality*, *29*, 661–670. https://doi.org/10.2224/sbp.2001.29.7.661

McCarthy, M. H., Wood, J. V., & Holmes, J. G. (2017). Dispositional pathways to trust: Self-esteem and agreeableness interact to predict trust and negative emotional disclosure. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *113*(1), 95–116. https://doi.org/10.1037/pspi0000093

Miller, N. (2002). Personalization and the promise of contact theory. *Journal of Social Issues*, *58*(2), 387–410. https://doi.org/10.1111/1540-4560.00267

Nevo, O., Nevo, B., & Derech-Zehavi, A. (1993). The development of the tendency to gossip questionnaire: Construct and concurrent validation for a sample of Israeli college students. *Educational and Psychological Measurement*, *53*(4), 973–981. https://doi.org/10.1177/0013164493053004010

Nielsen. (2012). Consumer trust in online, social and mobile advertising grows. Retrieved from https://www.nielsen.com/us/en/insights/news/2012/consumer-trust-in-online-social-and-mobile-advertising-grows.html

Omarzu, J. (2000). A disclosure decision model: Determining how and when individuals will self-disclose. *Personality and Social Psychology Review*, *4*(2), 174–185. https://doi.org/10.1207/S15327957PSPR0402_05

Pagel, M., & Mace, R. (2004). The cultural wealth of nations. *Nature*, *428*, 275–278. https://doi.org/10.1038/428275a

Paine, R. (1967). What is gossip about? An alternate hypothesis. *Man*, *2*, 278–285. https://doi.org/10.2307/2799493

Papanikolaou, A. (2006). Liberating Eros: Confession and desire. *Journal of the Society of Christian Ethics*, *26*, 115–136. https://www.jstor.org/stable/23561500

Pennebaker, J. W., & Beall, S. K. (1986). Confronting a traumatic event: Toward an understanding of inhibition and disease. *Journal of Abnormal Psychology*, *95*(3), 274–281. https://doi.org/10.1037/0021-843X.95.3.274

Pinchot, J., Chawdhry, A. A., & Paullet, K. (2018). Data privacy issues in the age of data brokerage: An exploratory literature review. *Issues in Information Systems*, *19*(3), 92–100. https://doi.org/10.48009/3_iis_2018_92-100

Reis, H. T., & Shaver, P. (1988). Intimacy as an interpersonal process. In S. Duck (Ed.). *Handbook of personal relationships* (pp. 367–389). John Wiley & Sons, Ltd.

Reis, H. T., Smith, S. M., Carmichael, C. L., Caprariello, P. A., Tsai, F. F., Rodrigues, A., & Maniaci, M. R. (2010). Are you happy for me? How sharing positive events with others provides personal and interpersonal benefits. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *99*, 311–329. https://doi.org/10.1037/a0018344

Rimé, B. (2009). Emotion elicits the social sharing of emotion: Theory and empirical review. *Emotion Review*, *1*(1), 60–85. https://doi.org/10.1177/1754073908097189

Rimé, B., Finkenauer, C., Luminet, O., Zech, E., & Philippot, P. (1998). Social sharing of emotion: New evidence and new questions. *European Review of Social Psychology*, *9*(1), 145–189. https://doi.org/10.1080/14792779843000072

Rimé, B., Mesquita, B., Boca, S., & Philippot, P. (1991). Beyond the emotional event: Six studies on the social sharing of emotion. *Cognition & Emotion*, *5*(5–6), 435–465. https://doi.org/10.1080/02699939108411052

Rimé, B., Philippot, P., Boca, S., & Mesquita, B. (1992). Long-lasting cognitive and social consequences of emotion: Social sharing and rumination. *European Review of Social Psychology*, *3*(1), 225–258. https://doi.org/10.1080/14792779243000078

Scopelliti, I., Loewenstein, G., & Vosgerau, J. (2015). You call it "self-exuberance"; I call it "bragging" miscalibrated predictions of emotional responses to self-promotion. *Psychological Science*, *26*(6), 903–914. https://doi.org/10.1177/0956797615573516

Seltzer, L. J., Ziegler, T. E., & Pollak, S. D. (2010). Social vocalizations can release oxytocin in humans. *Proceedings of the Royal Society B: Biological Sciences*, *277*(1694), 2661–2666. https://doi.org/10.1098/rspb.2010.0567

Sermat, V., & Smyth, M. (1973). Content analysis of verbal communication in the development of relationship: Conditions influencing self-disclosure. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *26*(3), 332–346. https://doi.org/10.1037/h0034473

Shaw, B. R., Hawkins, R., McTavish, F., Pingree, S., & Gustafson, D. H. (2006). Effects of insightful disclosure within computer mediated support groups on women with breast cancer. *Health Communication*, *19*(2), 133–142. https://doi.org/10.1207/s15327027hc1902_5

Sheese, B. E., Brown, E. L., & Graziano, W. G. (2004). Emotional expression in cyberspace: Searching for moderators of the Pennebaker disclosure effect via e-mail. *Health Psychology*, *23*(5), 457–464. https://doi.org/10.1037/0278-6133.23.5.457

Simo, H., & Kreutzer, M. (2022, May). REGRETS: A new corpus of regrettable (self-) disclosures on social media. In *IEEE INFOCOM 2022-IEEE Conference on Computer Communications Workshops (INFOCOM*

WKSHPS) (pp. 1–2). IEEE. https://doi.org/10.1109/INFOCOMWKSHPS54753.2022.9798377

Smith, H. J., Dinev, T., & Xu, H. (2011). Information privacy research: An interdisciplinary review. *MIS Quarterly*, *35*, 989. https://doi.org/10.2307/41409970

Smith, H. J., Milberg, S. J., & Burke, S. J. (1996). Information privacy: Measuring individuals' concerns about organizational practices. *MIS Quarterly*, *20*, 167–196. https://doi.org/10.2307/249477

Stiles, W. B. (1987). I Have to Talk to Somebody. In V. J. Derlega & J. H. Berg (Eds.). *Perspectives in social psychology: Self-disclosure* (pp. 257–282). Springer. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-1-4899-3523-6_12

Sundaram, D. S., Mitra, K., & Webster, C. (1998). Word-of-mouth communications: A motivational analysis. In J. W. Alba & J. W. Hutchinson (Eds.). *NA – Advances in consumer research*, *25* (pp. 527–531). Association for Consumer Research.

Tamir, D. I., Zaki, J., & Mitchell, J. P. (2015). Informing others is associated with behavioral and neural signatures of value. *Journal of Experimental Psychology: General*, *144*(6), 1114-1 123. https://doi.org/10.1037/xge0000122

Thibaut, J., & Kelley, H. H. (1959). *The social psychology of groups*. Routledge.

Tomasello, M. (1999). *The cultural origins of human cognition*. Harvard University Press.

Wallace, E., Buil, I., & De Chernatony, L. (2014). Consumer engagement with self-expressive brands: Brand love and WOM outcomes. *The Journal of Product and Brand Management*, *23*(1), 33–42. https://doi.org/10.1108/JPBM-06-2013-0326

Wang, Y., Norcie, G., Komanduri, S., Acquisti, A., Leon, P. G., & Cranor, L. F. (2011, July). "I regretted the minute I pressed share" a qualitative study of regrets on Facebook. In *Proceedings of the seventh symposium on usable privacy and security* (pp. 1–16). https://doi.org/10.1145/2078827.2078841

Wert, S. R., & Salovey, P. (2004). A social comparison account of gossip. *Review of General Psychology*, *8*(2), 122–137. https://doi.org/10.1037/1089-2680.8.2.122

Westbrook, R. A. (1987). Product/consumption-based affective responses and postpurchase processes. *Journal of Marketing Research*, *24*, 258–270. https://doi.org/10.1177/002224378702400302

Zech, E., Rimé, B., & Nils, F. (2004). Social sharing of emotion, emotional recovery, and interpersonal aspects. In P. Philippot & R. S. Feldman (Eds.). *The regulation of emotion* (pp. 157–185). Psychology Press.

How to cite this article: Carbone, E., & Loewenstein, G. (2023). The drive to disclose. *Consumer Psychology Review*, *6*(1), 17–32. https://doi.org/10.1002/arcp.1086

APPENDIX A

Table A1 Data on self-reported tendency to over-/under-share (from Carbone et al., 2022)

Over/Under-Sharing Ratings
(Pooled Study 1 & 2 Respondents; N = 402)

(Scale: -5=Don't share thoughts and feelings when I probably should; 5=Share thoughts and feelings when I probably should not)