Motivated Symbolic Interpretation Theory (MSIT): A Summary.

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Core Definitions

1. **Satisfier**
   A stimulus, experience, or condition that supports or fulfils one or more fundamental human needs (e.g., understanding, identity, participation, safety, recognition).

2. **Contra-satisfier**
   A stimulus, experience, or condition that frustrates, threatens, or obstructs the fulfilment of fundamental human needs.

3. **Satisfier-Associated Symbol**
   A word, phrase, image, or gesture that has acquired positive connotations through past association with satisfier experiences.

4. **Contra-satisfier-Associated Symbol**
   A word, phrase, image, or gesture that has acquired negative connotations through past association with contra-satisfier experiences.

5. **Pre-cognitive Filtering**
   A psychological process by which incoming information is affectively evaluated based on associated satisfiers or contra-satisfiers, often before conscious deliberation occurs.

6. **Connotative Frame**
   The affective and cultural meanings attached to a symbol or phrase, shaping how it is interpreted beyond its literal or denotative content.

Propositions

1. **Proposition 1: Pre-Engagement Filtering**
   Before conscious evaluation occurs, perceptual and conceptual stimuli are filtered affectively based on previously learnt associations with satisfiers and contra-satisfiers.

2. **Proposition 2: Symbolic Connotation and Response**
   Symbols associated with satisfiers tend to evoke approach behaviour (e.g., curiosity, trust), while those associated with contra-satisfiers tend to evoke avoidance behaviour (e.g., resistance, dismissal).

3. **Proposition 3: Cultural and Contextual Variability**
   The satisfiers and contra-satisfiers associated with a symbol are culturally and contextually dependent, shaped by collective experiences, ideological frameworks, and interpretive communities.

4. **Proposition 4: Communication Impact**
   The success or failure of communication efforts, such as academic papers, therapeutic interventions, or relationship conversations, is partly determined by whether their symbolic content is associated with satisfiers or contra-satisfiers by the audience.

5. **Proposition 5: Strategic Reframing**
   Intentional reframing of language to foreground satisfier associations and avoid contra-satisfier associations can increase receptivity, trust, and engagement without altering substantive content.

6. **Proposition 6: Cross-Domain Applicability**
   This affective filtering mechanism operates across domains (academic, interpersonal, clinical, political, and aesthetic) suggesting a generalisable theory of symbolic resonance and resistance.