

Helping People to Forgive: Practical Advice

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August 30, 2016
2:00 to 3:00

Goals

- Discuss Forgiveness
 - Define
 - Illustrate
- Discuss Self-Forgiveness
 - Define
 - Illustrate
- Answer Your Questions

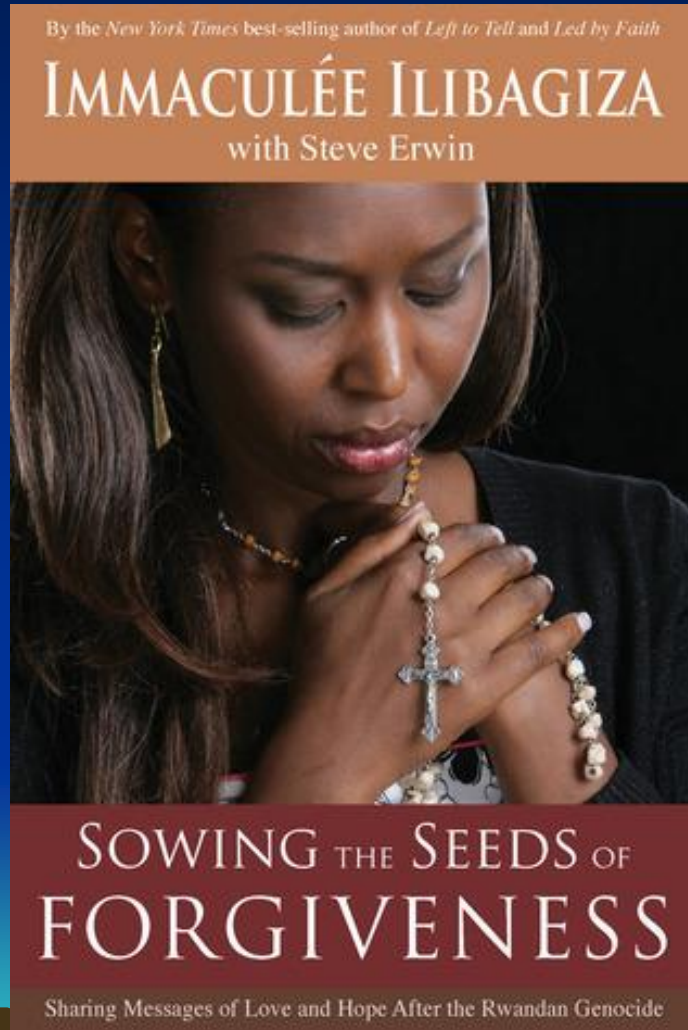


Nelson Mandela



A great inspirational leader with policies and procedures that organized societal interactions in a way that might lead to more forgiveness, reconciliation, peace, and healing.

Immaculée Ilibagiza



A Rwandan woman with a powerful story

Forgiveness



I Know that Forgiveness Is Very Difficult



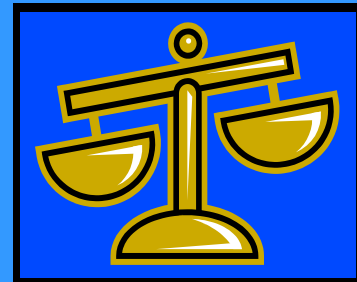
1. It's not fair!!

- We have a strong justice motive
- Fehr et al. (2005): When people are given the chance to hurt an offender, they will—even though it is costly to them.
- We must also be hardwired in some way for reconciliation as well.



Bookkeeper Syndrome

“Injustice Gap”



(Definition) the gap between my ideal and the way that I perceive that things currently stand

Davis, D. E., Yang, X., DeBlaere, C., McElroy, S. E., Van Tongeren, D. R., Hook, J. N., Worthington, E. L., Jr. (in press). The injustice gap. *Psychology of Religion and Spirituality*, in press.

How we respond to being hurt

- Blame other
- Blame God
- Blame self

“Someone **owes** me. Someone must **pay** for this ... in terms of suffering.”



We Have Options

- There are many ways to deal with injustice →

Wade, N. G., & Worthington, E. L., Jr. (2003). Overcoming interpersonal offenses: Is forgiveness the only way to deal with unforgiveness? *Journal of Counseling and Development*, 81, 343-353.

a. See Justice done →

**Worthington, E. L., Jr. (2009). A just forgiveness: Responsible healing without excusing injustice. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press.



c. Turn it over to God



TRUTH
THE ROAD TO
RECONCILIATION

- South Africa (St. James Church)



Chris Carrier



He turned it over to God

d. Forbearance

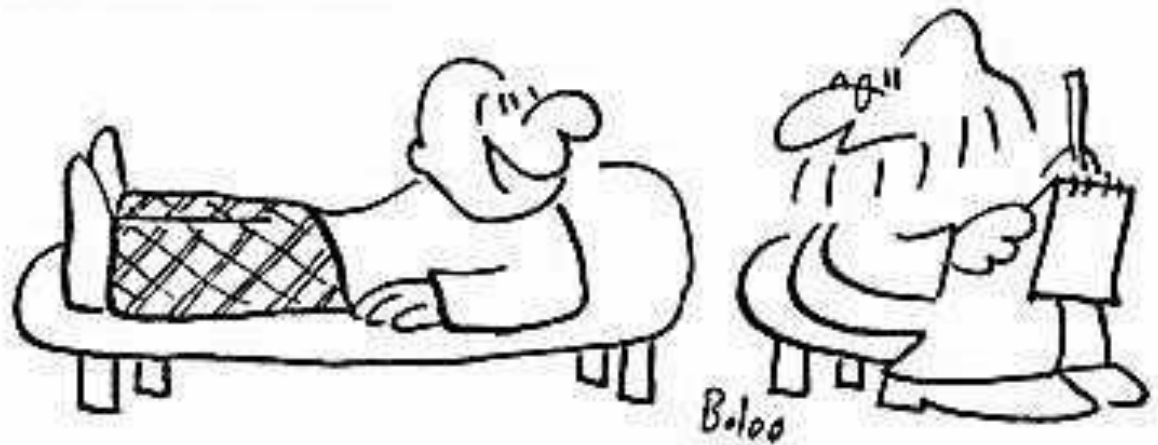
Lin, Y., Worthington, E. L., Jr., & Wertheim, E. (2015). Forbearance: Creation of a brief measure and evidence of psychometric support. Unpublished manuscript, in preparation.

- Effortful attempts to ignore or accept the transgression without making a negative response
- Involves effortfully controlling negative motivations
- Involves effortfully controlling negative feelings

e. Accept and move on

- Stuff happens

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"Sure, I can learn to accept things as they are. How are they?"

4. Forgive

- One of those options is to forgive



"I appreciate your memo calling for more tolerant and forgiving parents. Now, what did you do this time?"

a. Historically, there has been a lot of conflict over how forgiveness is *defined*.



Historically, there has been a lot of conflict over how forgiveness is defined. Here are two forgiveness researchers discussing their definitions.



← ME before that
unfortunate bulimic
period

b. What Forgiveness Is NOT

- Not Forbearance
- Not Condoning
- Not Reconciling
- Not Forgetting
- Not Justifying
- Not Getting Justice
- Not Excusing



c. Decisional Forgiveness

An intention statement stating one's intent to forswear revenge or avoidance and to treat the person as a valuable and valued person.



Davis, D. E., Hook, J. N., Van Tongeren, D. R., DeBlaere, C., Rice, K. G., & Worthington, E. L., Jr. (2015). Making a decision to forgive. *Journal of Counseling Psychology*, 62(2), 280-288.

(2) We might decide to forgive and still feel Emotional Unforgiveness

A complex combination of negative emotions (i.e., resentment, bitterness, hostility, hatred, anger, and fear.



“Sure, I’ve forgiven him—completely.”

d. Emotional Forgiveness

Emotional forgiveness is defined as the emotional replacement of negative unforgiving emotions by positive other-oriented emotions

This might lead to neutralization of negative emotions (particularly in stranger dyads) and eventual replacement by net positive emotions (usually desired in continuing intimate dyads)



f. What are the Positive other-oriented emotions?

- Empathy
- Sympathy
- Compassion
- Agape (altruistic) love
- Romantic love



5. NOT, I'll Forgive Him When He Has Paid Back the Last Cent

- Don't Wait for Apology, Restitution, Remorse
- That is justice, not forgiveness
- Forgive unilaterally



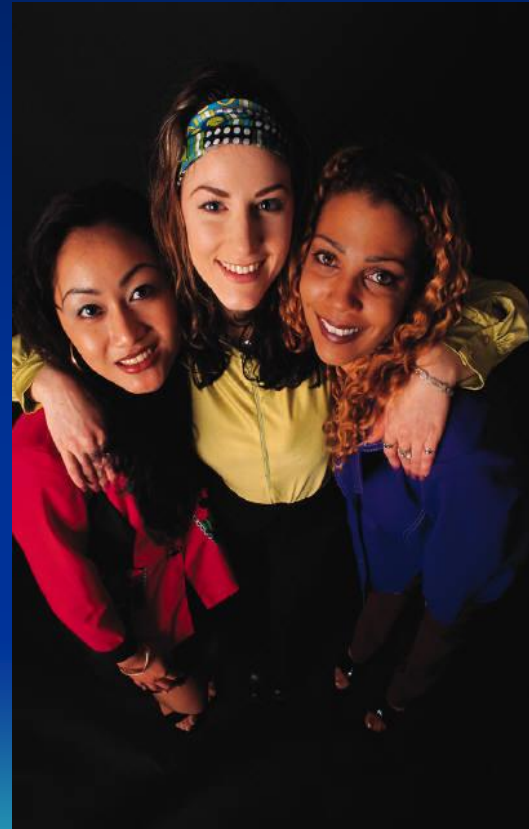
7. Don't Confuse DF, EF, and Reconciliation

Reconciliation:
restoration of trust
in a relationship
where trust has
been violated

DF=decision

EF=emotional experience

Both occur within our skin



Forgiveness can promote reconciliation

8. A Method for Forgiving Faster

- REACH Forgiveness
(Very fast overview)



The 5 Steps to REACH Emotional Forgiveness

R=Recall the Hurt

**E=Empathize (Sympathize, feel
Compassion for, Love) the
Transgressor**

A=give an Altruistic Gift of Forgiveness

**C=Commit to the Emotional
Forgiveness One Experienced**

**H=Hold on to Forgiveness When
Doubts Arise**



Five Steps to REACH Emotional Forgiveness



Want to lead a group: *I have secular and Christian training tapes—FREE.*
Want to work through a workbook: Go to www.EvWorthington-forgiveness.com

Meta-analysis

Wade, N. G., Hoyt, W. T., Kidwell, J. E. M., & Worthington, E. L., Jr. (2014). Efficacy of psychotherapeutic interventions to promote forgiveness: A meta-analysis. *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology*, 82(1), 154-170.

- **Meta-Analysis of Interventions Show That They Work in Small Groups or With Individuals in Workbooks**
- **ES=0.1 per hour of intervention**

Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology

Efficacy of Psychotherapeutic Interventions to Promote Forgiveness: A Meta-Analysis

Nathaniel G. Wade, William T. Hoyt, Julia E. M. Kidwell, and Everett L. Worthington, Jr.

Online First Publication, December 23, 2013. doi: 10.1037/a0035268

CITATION

Wade, N. G., Hoyt, W. T., Kidwell, J. E. M., & Worthington, E. L., Jr. (2013, December 23). Efficacy of Psychotherapeutic Interventions to Promote Forgiveness: A Meta-Analysis. *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology*. Advance online publication. doi: 10.1037/a0035268

Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology

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Efficacy of Psychotherapeutic Interventions to Promote Forgiveness: A Meta-Analysis

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Objective: This meta-analysis addressed the efficacy of psychotherapeutic interventions to help people forgive others and to examine moderators of treatment effects. **Method:** Eligible studies reported quantitative data on forgiveness of a specific hurt following treatment by a professional with an intervention designed explicitly to promote forgiveness. Random effects meta-analyses were conducted using $k = 53$ posttreatment effect sizes ($N = 2,323$) and $k = 41$ follow-up effect sizes ($N = 1,716$) from a total of 54 published and unpublished research reports. **Results:** Participants receiving explicit forgiveness treatments reported significantly greater forgiveness than participants not receiving treatment ($\Delta_+ = 0.56 [0.43, 0.68]$) and participants, receiving alternative treatments ($\Delta_+ = 0.45 [0.21, 0.69]$). Also, forgiveness treatments resulted in greater changes in depression, anxiety, and hope than no-treatment conditions. Moderators of treatment efficacy included treatment dosage, offense severity, treatment model, and treatment modality. Multimoderator analyses indicated that treatment dosage (i.e., longer interventions) and modality (individual > group) uniquely predicted change in forgiveness compared with no-treatment controls. Compared with alternative treatment conditions, both modality (individual > group) and offense severity were marginally predictive ($ps < .10$) of treatment effects. **Conclusions:** It appears that using theoretically grounded forgiveness interventions is a sound choice for helping clients to deal with past offenses and helping them achieve resolution in the form of forgiveness. Differences between treatment approaches disappeared when controlling for other significant moderators; the advantage for individual interventions was most clearly demonstrated for Enright model interventions, as there have been no studies of individual interventions using the Worthington model.

Keywords: forgiveness, interventions, efficacy, treatment, anger

Can People Be Helped to Forgive?

- Wade, N. G., Hoyt, W. T., Kidwell, J. E. M., & Worthington, E. L., Jr. (2014). Efficacy of psychotherapeutic interventions to promote forgiveness: A meta-analysis. *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology*, 82(1), 154-170.
- REACH Forgiveness ($n=22$) = Process ($n=23$) = All others ($n=22$)
- Efficacy is proportional to time in treatment.



Forgiveness in psychoeducational groups: Hour for hour, all forgiveness treatments that have been investigated have been found to be equal.

Hour for hour about 0.1 SD change per hour of group treatment; a little more for individual treatment. This is for people SEEKING treatment. Expect less for those just “exposed” to treatment.

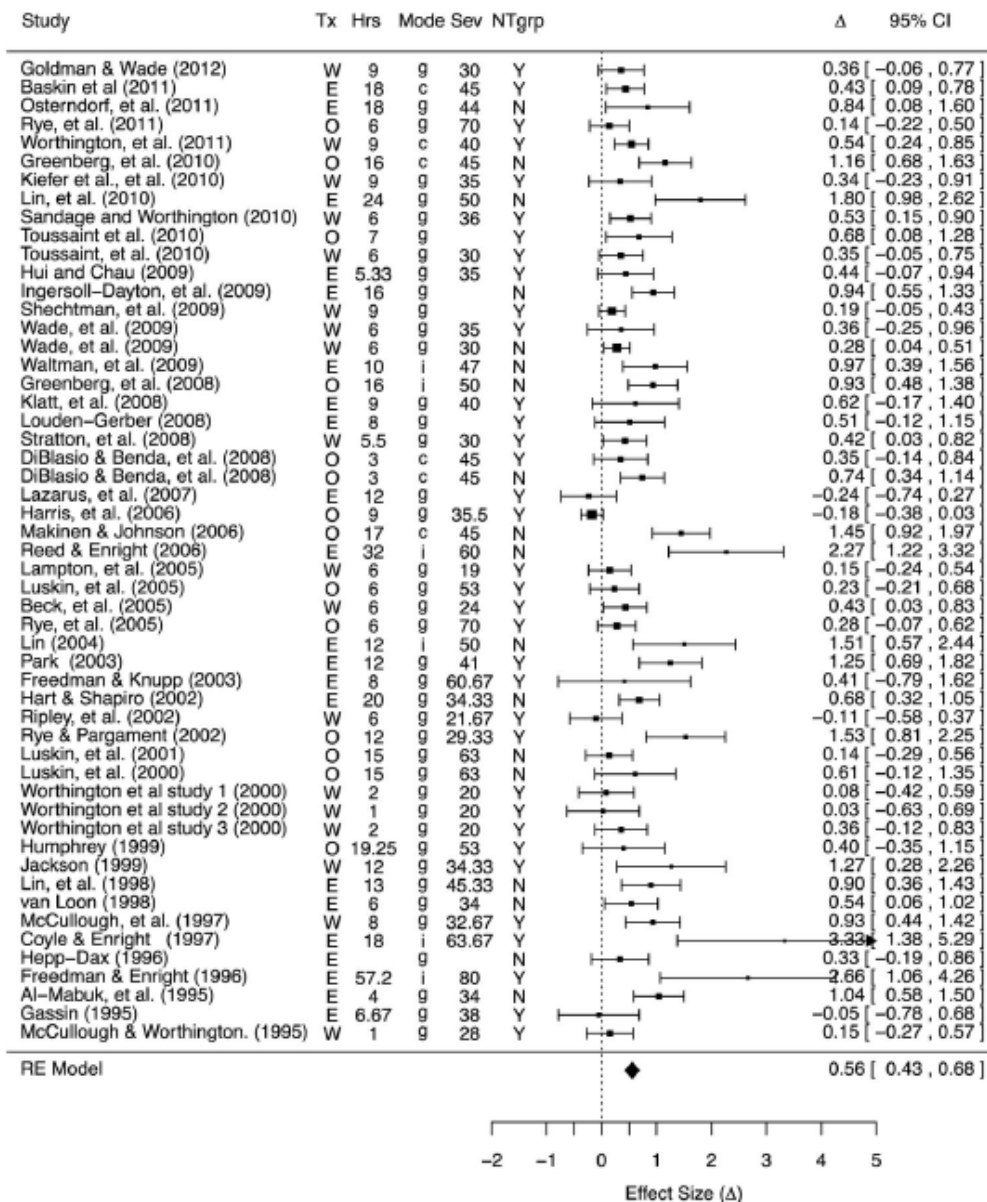


Figure 2. Forgiveness interventions: Treatment-control comparisons. Tx = treatment model; W = Worthington, E = Enright, and O = other treatment model. Mode = treatment modality; g = group, c = couples, and i = individual therapy modality. NTgrp = no-treatment control group; Y = yes and N = no. Sev = offense severity. Hrs = hours; CI = confidence interval; RE = random effects.

Table 1
Omnibus Effect Sizes and Heterogeneity Tests With Forgiveness as a Dependent Variable

Comparison	k	Δ_+	95% CI	Q	p	I ²
No treatment	53	0.56	[0.43, 0.68]	188.91	<.0001	72%
Alternative treatment	22	0.45	[0.21, 0.69]	72.39	<.0001	77%

Note. Studies were modeled as random effects. k = number of studies; Δ_+ = effect size (standardized mean difference controlling for preintervention scores; Becker, 1988); CI = confidence interval; Q = homogeneity test; p = probability value for Q statistic under H_0 ($df = k - 1$); I² = percentage of variance in effect sizes that is attributable to systematic variation.

Treatment better than none;
treatment better than alternatives

Main Analysis

- Dosage ($p < .002$)
- Treatment Model
 - W v E ($p = .27$)
 - E v Other ($p = .15$)
- Modality
 - I > G ($p = .021$)
 - I = C ($p = .251$)

Table 4
Multiple-Moderator Analyses—Significant Single Predictors Only

Variable	B	95% CI	p
Treatment—no treatment comparisons			
Intercept	0.92*	[0.15, 1.70]	.020
Dosage (hours)	0.033*	[0.012, 0.055]	.002
Offense severity	−0.001	[−0.013, 0.012]	.873
Treatment model			
Worthington vs. Enright	−0.19	[−0.52, 0.14]	.270
Other vs. Enright	−0.25	[−0.58, 0.09]	.150
Modality			
Group vs. individual	−0.57*	[−1.05, −0.08]	.021
Couple vs. individual	−0.31	[−0.84, 0.22]	.251
Treatment—alternative treatment comparisons			
Intercept	−0.25	[−2.77, 2.28]	.849
Dosage (hours)	−0.01	[−0.057, 0.036]	.658
Offense severity	0.045 ^a	[−0.003, 0.093]	.068
Treatment model			
Worthington vs. Enright	−0.03	[−0.69, 0.63]	.923
Other vs. Enright	−0.14	[−1.32, 1.03]	.810
Modality			
Group vs. individual	−0.79	[−2.00, 0.42]	.201
Other vs. Enright	−1.27 ^a	[−2.63, 0.09]	.067

Note. Overall tests of model significance were $Q(6) = 35.74$ and 17.82 ; $ps = < .0001$ and $= .007$; $ks = 46$ and 21 for no-treatment and alternative-treatment comparisons, respectively. CI = confidence interval.

^a Marginally significant ($.05 < p < .10$).

* $p < .05$.

Other Outcomes Besides Forgiveness

- Depression ($k = 10$), $ES = \underline{0.34}$, 95% CI [0.17, 0.52]. Compare forgiveness in this same group of studies, $ES = \underline{0.60}$, 95% CI [0.26, 0.94] ($p = .09$).
- Anxiety ($k = 7$), the aggregate effect size for anxiety was $\underline{0.63}$, 95% CI [0.0003, 1.26]. Compare forgiveness $ES = \underline{1.34}$, 95% CI [0.55, 2.12] ($p = .21$).
- Hope ($k = 6$), the aggregate effect size for hope was $\underline{1.00}$, 95% CI [0.38, 1.62]. Compare forgiveness $ES = \underline{0.94}$, 95% CI [0.16, 1.73] ($p = .96$).
- Conclusion
 - When people participate in forgiveness interventions, their depression and anxiety get better but at a reduced rate relative to the forgiveness experienced (about half the effect size), but hope gets better about the same rate (equal effect size).



Workbooks

The Path to Forgiveness: Six Practical Sections for Becoming a More Forgiving Person

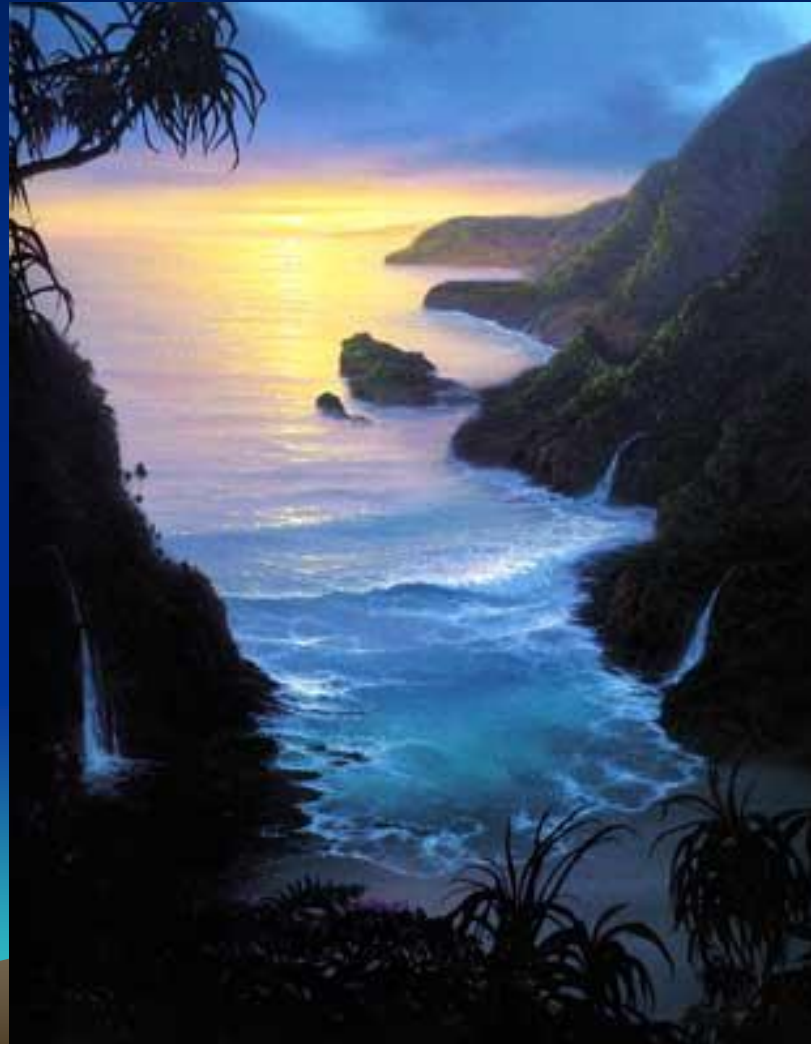


Self-Directed Learning Workbook

An Intervention to Promote Forgiveness

- Secular groups: ES = 0.1/hour
- Workbooks
 - Harper et al. (in press, J Cl P).
ES = 0.5/6 hours = 0.08/hour
 - Greer et al. (under review) (Christian)
ES = 1.3/6.7 hours = 0.2/hour
 - Lavelock et al. (under review)
ES (trait) = 0.5/6 hours = 0.08/hour
- Harper, Q., Worthington, E. L., Jr., Griffin, B. J., Lavelock, C. R., Hook, J. N., Vrana, S. R., & Greer, C. L. (in press). Efficacy of a workbook to promote forgiveness: A randomized controlled trial with university students. *Journal of Clinical Psychology*, in press.
- Greer, C. L., Worthington, E. L., Jr., Lin, Y., Lavelock, C. R., & Griffin, B. J. (in press). Efficacy of a self-directed forgiveness workbook for Christian victims of within-congregation offenders. *Spirituality in Clinical Practice*, in press.
- Lavelock, C. R., Worthington, E. L., Jr., Greer, C. L., Lin, Y., & Griffin, B. J. (under review). Four virtues: Interventions for goodness' sake.

Quick Birds-Eye View of the REACH Forgiveness Method



Definition

- Define Decisional and Emotional Forgiveness



Invite Decisional Forgiveness



Decision to Forgive
Lima Peru, Oct 29, 2011



Five Steps to REACH Emotional Forgiveness of the Partner



FREE

REACH



- R = Recall the hurt
- Technique: not victimization, not blame; instead objective

FREE

REACH

E = Empathize with the one who hurt you

- **Techniques:**
- **Letter from other's point of view**
- **Talk about other's experiences**
 - **Empty chair**
 - **Multiple repetitions with sympathy, compassion, altruistic (agape) love, romantic love**



FREE

REACH

A = Altruistic
gift of
forgiveness

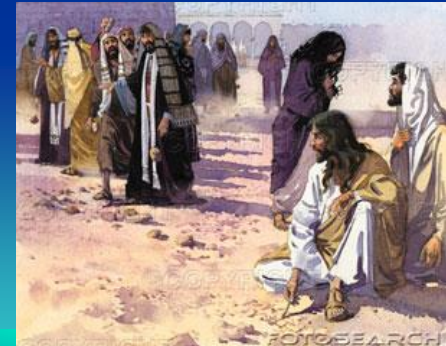
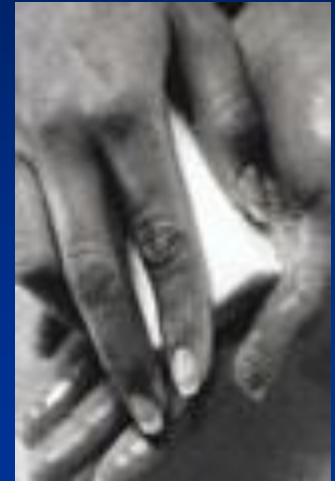


FREE



REACH

- C = Commit to forgive
- Techniques: certificate, letter, washing the hands of the transgression, (for Christians) nail the transgression to the cross



- Hand-washing



FREE

REACH

- H = Hold onto forgiveness during doubts
- Technique: hurt does not equal unforgiveness, white bears



Control Rumination or Worry



3. Important Example

- Burned by a hot stove eye
- Hurt does not equal unforgiveness



Practical advice on running groups

- Worthington, E. L., Jr., Sandage, S. J., & Berry, J. W. (2000). Group interventions to promote forgiveness: What researchers and clinicians ought to know. In M.E. McCullough, K.I. Pargament, & C.E. Thoresen (Eds.), *Forgiveness: Theory, research and practice* (pp. 228-253). New York: Guilford Press.
 - Updates: DVD training group is available for Christian and Secular groups
 - Manuals posted on www.EvWorthington-forgiveness.com

Best Practices in Running Psychoeducational Groups

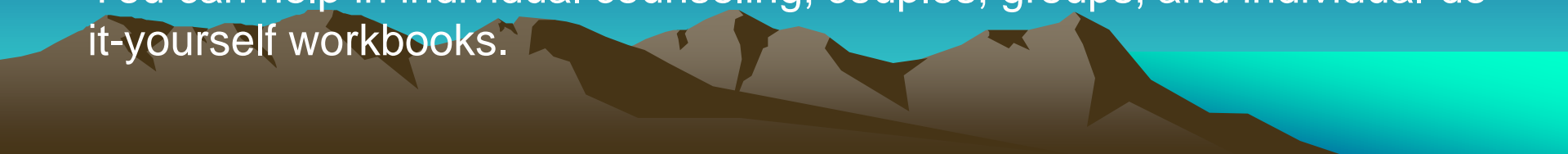
Most talk happens in pairs.

- Begin with an ice-breaker that asks people to do something fun, like identify their favorite dessert, and then tell the hardest thing they successfully forgave.
- Set ground rules.
- Get common definition by suggesting one, not using an open-ended discussion.
- **Most discussion happens in pairs.**
- Whip around (starting in different places each time) to get feedback on what was discussed.
- Use exercises that involve all modalities, not just talking and listening.
- **Try to discern who is likely to have forgiven the most in a group.**
- Involve people in applying the REACH Forgiveness steps in many instances.



"I forgave thissss much!"

Practical Advice for Dealing with Forgiveness of Others

- Promote forgiveness in every **willing** heart, home, and homeland. They need to be willing. It does not work to coerce people to forgive if they don't want to.
 - There are many legitimate options to deal with injustices; forgiveness is just one.
 - Understanding the “injustice gap” can be a real key to helping people understand why they might be having difficulty forgiving.
 - People can make a sincere decision to forgive, but still be upset (emotional unforgiveness).
 - Saying, “I forgive you” is not the same as forgiving.
 - Forgiveness can be done without reconciling.
 - Forgiveness takes time—one hour per 0.1 SDs of change.
 - You can help in individual counseling, couples, groups, and individual-do-it-yourself workbooks.
- 

9. A Method for Reconciliation

- Processes to build reconciliation
 - Decision
 - Discussion
 - Detoxification
 - Devotion



Worthington, E. L., Jr. (2003). *Forgiving and reconciling: Bridges to wholeness and hope*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press.

Summary

- You will often be involved not just with an individual forgiving someone, but about forgiveness in local individuals, social relationships, families and communities. It is about forgiving between and among people—just folks. This involves far more than forgiveness. It involves talking about transgressions, saying “I forgive you,” and acting toward reconciliation.



It is essential to be able to forgive others and oneself

- Oneself also because wrongs are rarely one-sided. We do harmful, guilt-producing, shameful things, too.
- That can lead to self-condemnation.



Dealing with the Dark Side: Self- Condemnation

- Let's talk about dealing with self-condemnation



A True Story

The
Mission
(1986
film),
1986 film
by Roland
Joffé



1750s in Paraguay. Rodrigo Mendoza and the Guarani tribe.



© 1986 Warner Bros. Pictures

What does this movie teach?

- When people wrong others, they often inflict moral injuries on themselves.
- People cannot (perhaps should not) forgive themselves until some moral repair is experienced.
 - Making Amends
 - Forgiveness from God
 - Forgiveness from Others



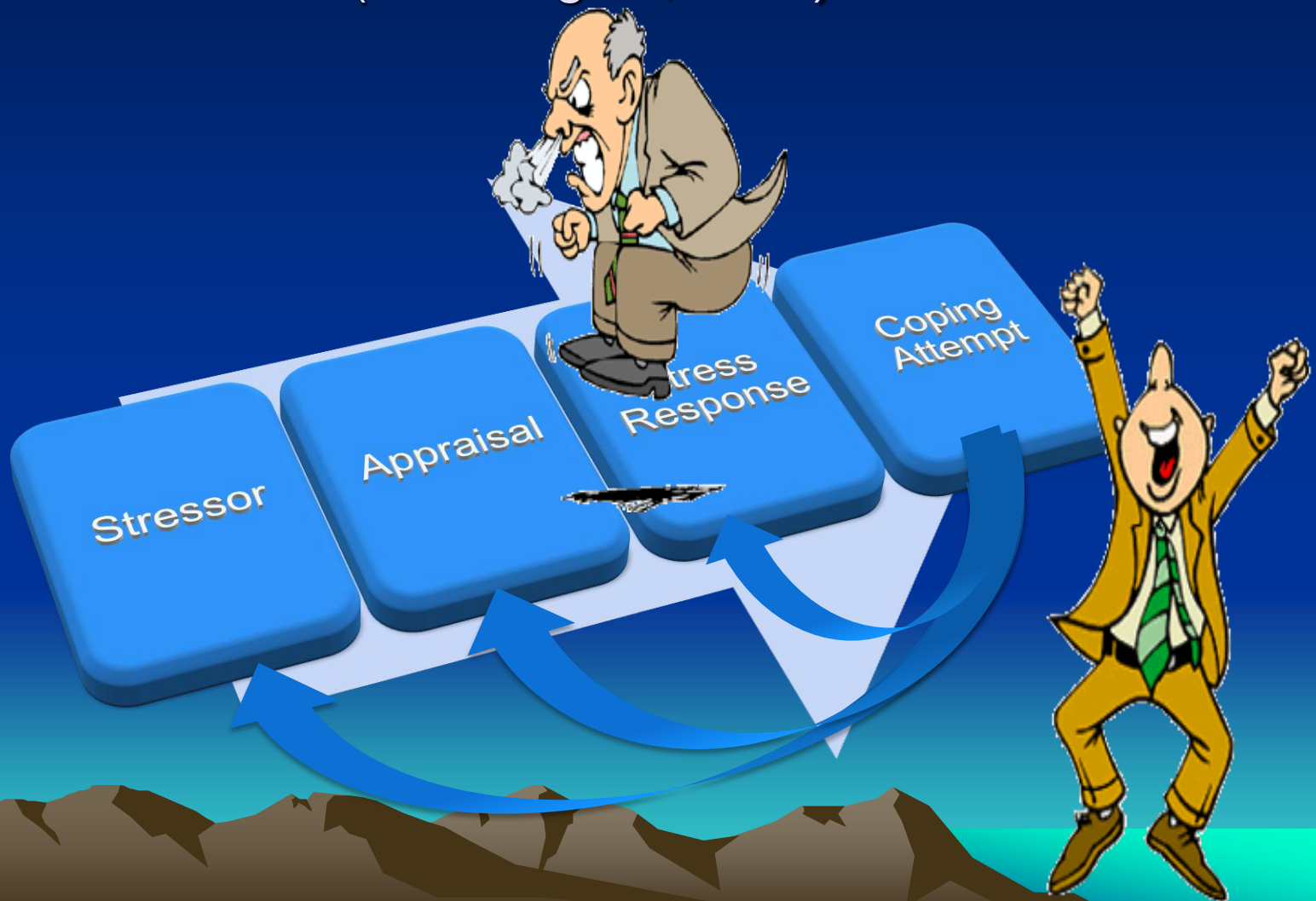
What is self-forgiveness?

- “Willingness to abandon self-resentment in the face of one’s own acknowledged objective wrong, while fostering compassion, generosity and love toward oneself.” (Enright et al., 1996)
- “Motivational changes whereby one becomes decreasingly motivated to avoid stimuli associated with the offense, decreasingly motivated to retaliate against the self, and increasingly motivated to act benevolently toward the self.” (Hall & Fincham, 2008)
- Two-factor Model of Self-forgiveness
 - Self-forgiveness = Reaffirmation of Values + Positive Self-regard (Griffin et al., 2015)



Self-forgiveness: A Stress-and-Coping Model

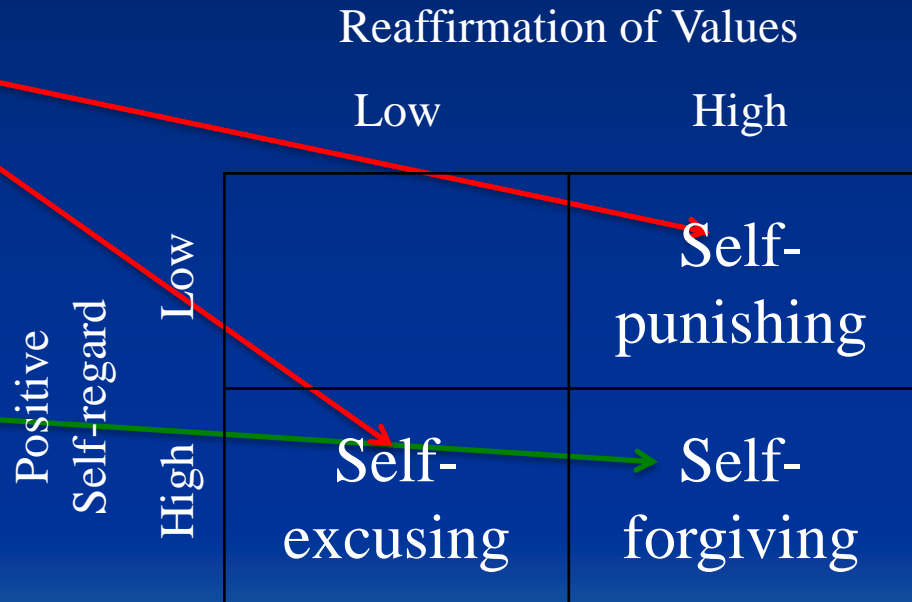
(Worthington, 2013)



Coping with Self-condemnation— Many Ways (Not All Are Adaptive)

Two-Factor Model of Self-forgiveness

- *Conservative coping* - intended to return one's life or self-representation to a pre-offense state
- *Transformative coping* - intended to incorporate the offense into a new lifestyle or self-representation



(Pargament, 1997)

Correlates of Self-forgiveness (Davis et al., 2013)

- Davis et al. (2013) meta-analyzed 118 unique samples ($N = 32,103$)
- Selected associations with Emotional Responses to Appraised Stressors (Stress Reactions)
 - General Positive ($r = 0.40$) and Negative ($r = -0.46$) Emotion
 - Trait Anger ($r = -0.27$), Guilt ($r = -0.19$), and Shame ($r = -0.44$)
- Selected associations with Physical/Mental Health (Outcomes)
 - General Physical ($r = .30$) and Mental ($r = .39$) Health
 - Trauma ($r = -0.44$), Depression ($r = -0.40$), Rumination ($r = -0.48$), Suicide ($r = -0.29$), Substance Use ($r = -0.19$)
 - Well-being ($r = 0.34$)



Self-forgiveness Interventions

- Griffin et al., 2015
 - Over 200 students with relationship failures
- Cornish & Wade, 2015
 - Community members in individual psychotherapy
- Scherer et al., 2011
 - Clients at Out-patient Substance Use Treatment Facility
 - 4-hour Psycho-educational Group
- Campana, 2010
 - Undergraduate Women after Break-up of Romantic Relationship
 - 6-hour Workbook
- Fisher, 2009
 - Undergraduates
 - 1.5 hour online module



Self-Forgiveness: Responsible Response to Self-Condemnation or Trying to Let Yourself Off the Hook?

forgiveyourself.com

Thursday, 23 January 2014

MOVING FORWARD

Six Steps to Forgiving Yourself & Breaking Free from the Past

Welcome Book Excerpts FAQs Videos Get the Book Based on Research Articles About the Author ForgiveSelf.com

Welcome to ForgiveSelf.com

Self-blame, shame, and self-condemnation plague many people and keep them from living lives of freedom and abundance. If you are haunted by the pain of your mistakes and shortcomings, **Moving Forward** offers you a way to break free from the ghosts of your past. Learn the six steps to forgiving yourself and ending your struggle with self-blame forever.

~ A Personal Message from the Author ~

I'm **Everett Worthington**, a Professor of Psychology at Virginia Commonwealth University. I am also a licensed Clinical Psychologist in Virginia. Although I've published about 30 books and over 300 articles and scholarly chapters, mostly on forgiveness, marriage and family topics, and religion and spirituality, I'm the most excited about my newest book (released in mid-July 2013).

It is called **Moving Forward: Six Steps to Forgiving Yourself and Breaking Free from the Past**. Through my counseling and my personal experiences, I have found that many people are plagued by shame and self-blame. In **Moving Forward**, I tell how I struggled with self-condemnation after my brother's suicide, and how I moved through struggles with my faith and on to freedom from that self-condemnation. The **research** my colleagues and I are doing now shows how people can work through the six steps to forgiving themselves and experience freedom. I am excited to share this with you.

To see excerpts from the book, start at the [Prologue](#).

NOW AVAILABLE



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with ThemeKat & Warp Theme Framework

- Worthington, E. L., Jr. (2013). *Moving forward: Six steps to forgiving yourself and breaking free from the past*. Colorado Springs, CO: WaterBrook/Multnomah.

Six Steps to Self-Forgiveness

Worthington, E. L., Jr. (2013). *Moving Forward: Six Steps to Self-Forgiveness and Breaking Free from the Past*. Colorado Springs: WaterBrook/Multnomah.

- **Responsibility**
 - Step 1: Receive God's Forgiveness (or Humanity, or Nature)
 - Step 2: Repair Relationships
 - Step 3: Reduce Rumination (Rumination, Expectations, Standards)
- **REACH Emotional Self-Forgiveness**
 - Step 4: REACH Emotional Self-forgiveness
- **Repair of Self**
 - Step 5: Realize Self-Acceptance
 - Step 6: Resolve to Live Virtuously

Griffin, B. J., Worthington, E. L., Jr., Lavelock, C. R., Greer, C. L., Lin, ., Davis, D. E., & Hook, J. N. (2015). Efficacy of a self-forgiveness workbook: A randomized controlled trial with interpersonal offenders. *Journal of Counseling Psychology*, 62(2), 124-136.

Six Steps to Self-Forgiveness and Decisional Plus Emotional Self-Forgiveness



- **Responsibility**
 - Step 1: Receive God's Forgiveness (or Humanity, or Nature)—**Moral repair (Decisional)**
 - Step 2: Repair Relationships—**Moral repair (Decisional)**
 - Step 3: Reduce Rumination (Rumination, Expectations, Standards)—**Internal condemnation (Emotional)**
- **REACH Emotional Self-Forgiveness**
 - Step 4: Explicit Decision plus REACH Emotional Self-forgiveness)—**Moral Repair (Decisional) plus Internal condemnation (Emotional)**
- **Repair of Self**
 - Step 5: Realize Self-Acceptance—**Internal condemnation (Emotional)**
 - Step 6: Resolve to Live Virtuously—**Moral Repair (Decisional)**

Griffin, B. J., Worthington, E. L., Jr., Lavelock, C. R., Greer, C. L., Lin, ., Davis, D. E., & Hook, J. N. (2015). Efficacy of a self-forgiveness workbook: A randomized controlled trial with interpersonal offenders. *Journal of Counseling Psychology*, 62(2), 124-136.

Davis, D. E., Ho, M. Y., Griffin, B. J., Bell, C., Hook, J. N., Van Tongeren, D. R., Worthington, E. L., Jr., DeBlaere, C., & Westbrook, C. (2015). Forgiving the self and physical and mental health correlates: A meta-analytic review. *Journal of Counseling Psychology*, 62(2), 329-335.

Workbook to Promote Self-Forgiveness

*Moving Forward:
Six Steps to Forgiving Yourself and
Breaking Free from the Past*



Self-Directed Learning Workbook

An Intervention Designed to Promote Self-Forgiveness

*Everett L. Worthington, Jr., PhD
Virginia Commonwealth University*

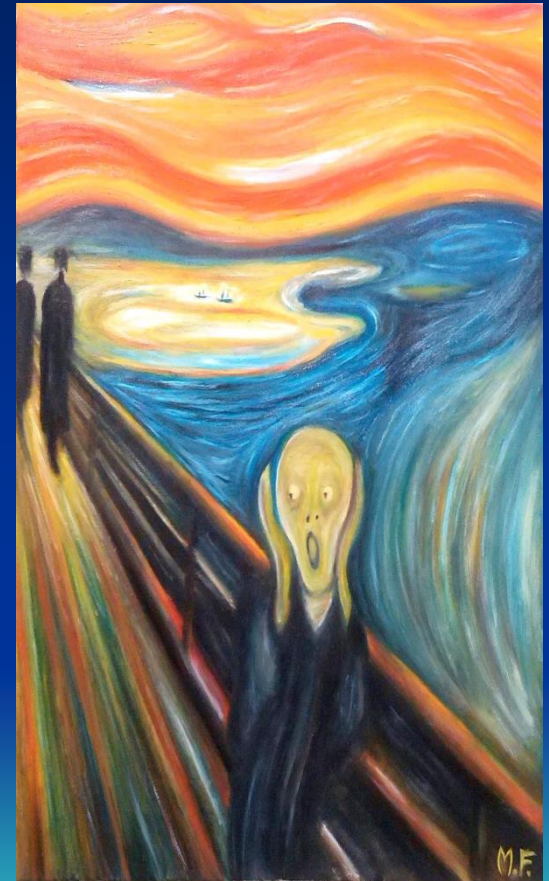
(Adapted as a Workbook by Brandon Griffin & Caroline Lavelock)

- 6 to 7 hours
- Do it yourself workbook

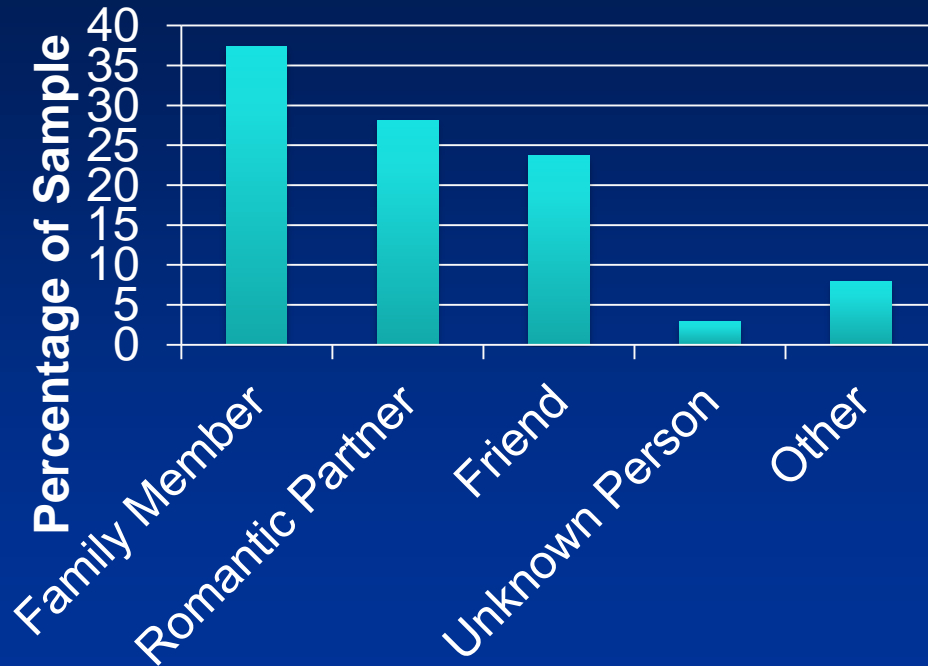
Griffin, B. J., Worthington, E. L., Jr., Lavelock, C. R., Greer, C. L., Lin, ., Davis, D. E., & Hook, J. N. (2015). Efficacy of a self-forgiveness workbook: A randomized controlled trial with interpersonal offenders. *Journal of Counseling Psychology*, 62(2), 124-136.

Offense-related Outcomes

- Initial equivalence of conditions.
- Participants' rated self-perceived severity of the target offense ($M = 17.53$, $SD = 3.02$).
 - When included in the final models, transgression severity did not predict differences between individuals in time-related change in self-forgiveness.
- But who are the victims of these offenses and when did they occur?



Victims of Reported Offenses



Time: Half of the people reported having felt self-blame and suffering for more than a year!

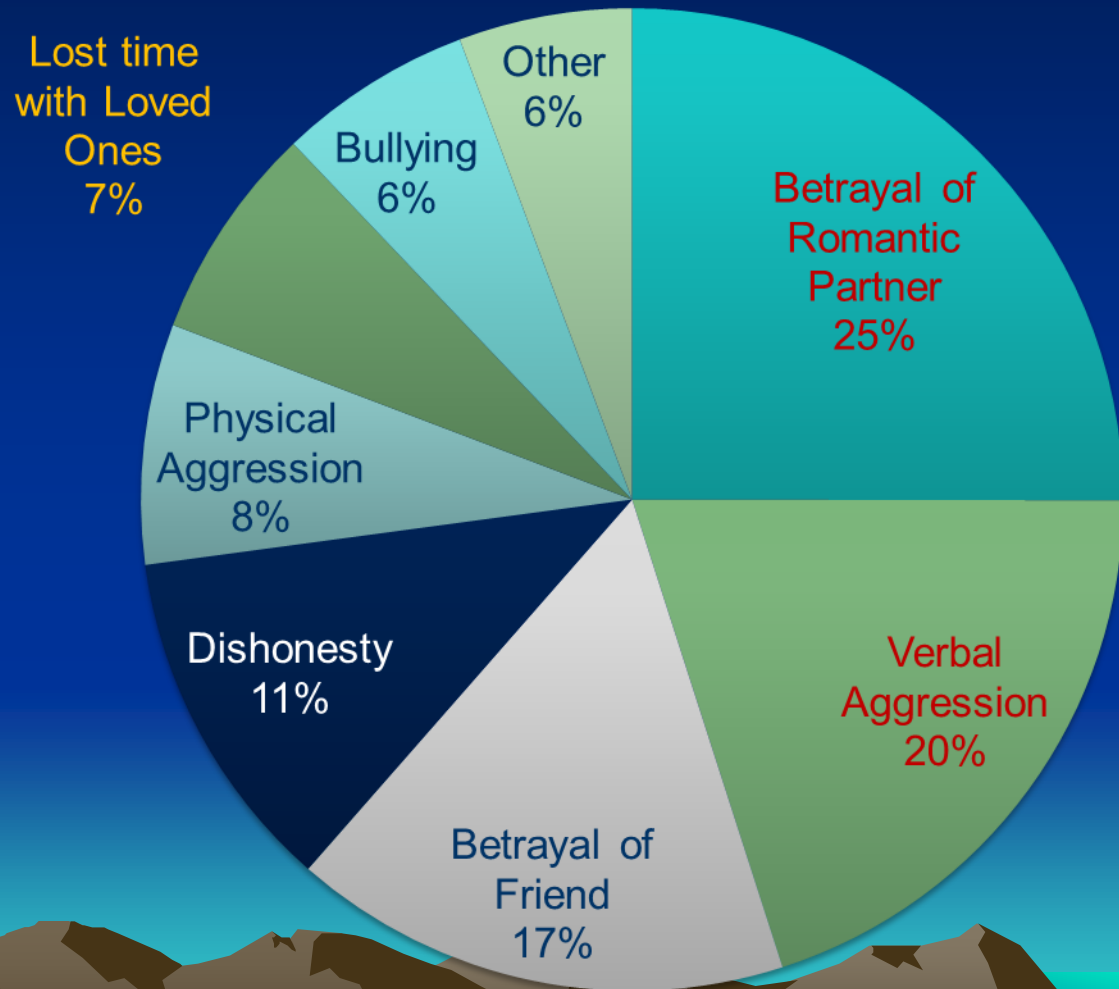
Who do we hurt? Those closet to us!

Selected Excerpts from Target Offense Descriptions

Category	Example
Betrayal of a Romantic Partner	"To this day I feel bad about about cheating on my ex boyfriend. Its been two years and while I can move on from him I cant move on from how I made him feel."
Betrayal of a Friend	"In my freshman year of high school I was best friends with a girl and she told me many of her secrets. I told one of her secrets to my brother, then he told his friends, then everything went downhill."
Verbal Aggression	"I was experiencing a manic episode of Bipolar disorder. My father made me feel upset for showing my emotions and I got angry with him and told him how hated he was."
Physical Aggression	"Me and my mom got in a huge fight and it got physical. It was both of our faults, because we both had built up anger but i regret letting it get that far."
Dishonesty	"About a month ago my mother caught me in a lie. She was super mad at me and I hurt her feelings because now she feels like she can't trust me. I think about it very often and try not to lie to her anymore."
Lost Time with Loved One	"My dad was an alcoholic my entire childhood. He sobered up for almost 2 years. When he relapsed I stopped communicating with him, until he had a horrific accident."
Other	"At a low point in my life, I was dating a guy who got me pregnant. I had to decide what to do about it and he offered no support. I ended up getting an

Descriptions of Target Offenses

(Griffin et al., 2013)



Waiting List Design

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- IT = Immediate Treatment
- WC= Wait Condition

Figure 3. Genuine Self-forgiveness Scores by Individual-level Predictors

A.

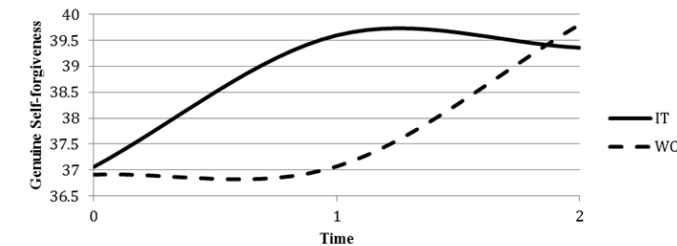


Figure 4. Depiction of time-related changes in participants' self-forgiving feelings and actions ratings by treatment condition.

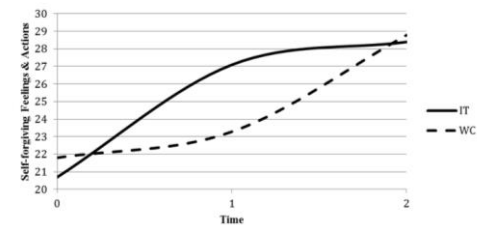


Figure 4. Depiction of time-related changes in participants' self-forgiving feelings and actions ratings by treatment condition. Participants in the immediate treatment condition (IT) completed the intervention between time 0 and 1; whereas, participants in the wait-list control condition completed the intervention between time 1 and 2.

Figure 5. Self-forgiving Beliefs by Treatment Condition

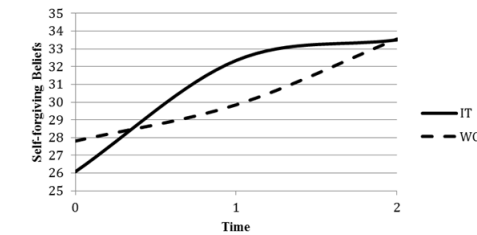
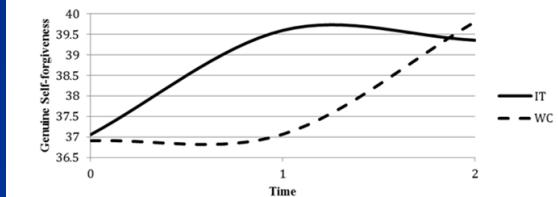
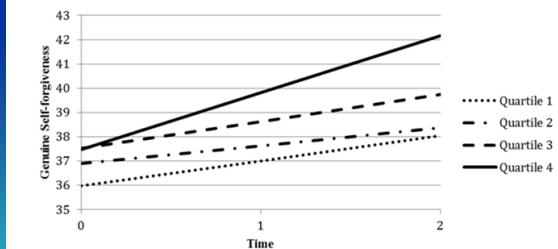


Figure 5. Depiction of time-related changes in participants' self-forgiving beliefs ratings by treatment condition. Participants in the immediate treatment condition (IT) completed the intervention between time 0 and 1; whereas, participants in the wait-list control condition completed the intervention between time 1 and 2.

A.



B.



Summary of Results

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- Six Steps to Self-Forgiveness Workbooks involved 6-7 hours (on the average) and resulted in a restoration of moral status (or moral repair or responsibility, including new beliefs and behaviors) and change in self-forgiving view or self (including new feelings of self-forgiveness).
 - Participants' ratings on all three measures of self-forgiveness improved as a function of treatment.
 - The effect of treatment depended upon self-administered dose and upon dispositional levels of self-compassion, but the nature of the moderation differed for specific outcome measures.

Take Home Points

- We can help people understand forgiveness.
- We can help people forgive others using REACH Forgiveness
- We can promote *responsible* self-forgiveness using six steps resulting in changes in one's moral self-evaluation and also their beliefs and feelings that they have forgiven themselves.



www.EvWorthington-forgiveness.com

- Check out this website with lots of free materials to help you and others be able to forgive yourself or others better.

