Allemand

The present study examined age differences in forgivingness, defined as an enduring tendency to forgive others. Building on the theory of socioemotional selectivity, the study aimed at clarifying the role of future time perspective and social proximity on age differences in forgivingness. Older (N = 132) and younger participants (N = 225) were instructed to judge their willingness to forgive as a function of social proximity and future time perspective. Controlling for self-reported future time perspective, results indicate that older adults were more willing to forgive than younger adults. Social proximity did not play a role in older adults, whereas younger adults reported greater forgivingness with respect to a friend as compared to an acquaintance. In addition, results demonstrate that the perception of future time plays an essential role in forgivingness. An age by future time perspective interaction effect was found, suggesting that the effect of limited future time perspective was smaller in older adults than in younger adults. Future directions concerning the meaning and possible implications of age differences in forgivingness are discussed.

Allemand, Job, et al., 2008

The present study investigated the relationship between forgivingness and action orientation, and examined the mediating role of action orientation for the neuroticism-forgivingness association. Participants (N = 210) completed the Tendency to Forgive Scale (TTF; Brown, 2003), two subscales from the Action Control Scale (ACS-90; Kuhl, 1994b) and the Neuroticism scale from the short form of the Big Five Inventory (BFI-K; Rammstedt & John, 2005). Results indicate that failure-related action orientation (AOF) was strongly positively related to forgivingness. Moreover, the negative relation between neuroticism and forgivingness was fully mediated by action orientation (AOF). This finding suggests that the ability to down-regulate negative affect is an important mechanism in explaining the association between neuroticism and forgivingness.

Armour

As prison populations continue to rise, faith-based and restorative justice programs show promise in influencing offenders' internal motivations and external behaviors. Using a one-group, pretest-posttest design, this pilot study found significant change in offenders' (n = 102) moral motivations (empathy, perspective taking, forgiveness, proneness to forgive, daily spiritual experiences, and relationships with others) after their self-selected participation in a 14-week faith-based program that draws from the principles of restorative justice. Hierarchical regression models were used to examine the impact of reported subscription to Christianity on pretests and score changes. At pre-test, Christian participants (n = 66) were more likely to forgive than non-Christian participants (n = 33) who conversely were more likely to see the perspectives of others. Christian offenders had significantly higher change scores on perspective taking and empathic concern than non-Christian participants. Findings have implications for the use of faith-based programs and victim-centered curriculums to change offenders' moral motivations and for matching faith-based Christian programs with Christian participants.
**Bassett**
The studies reported in this paper used an experimental paradigm to explore some of the dynamics of seeking forgiveness. Christian college students were asked to imagine scenarios where one person transgressed against another. The first study manipulated the presence or absence of seeking forgiveness from the victim, seeking forgiveness from God, and self-forgiveness within a $2 \times 2 \times 2$ factorial design. After imagining each scenario, participants then evaluated the offender, the situation, and the relationship between the offender and the victim. The second study used similar procedures to focus on the role of moral emotions, on the part of the transgressor, in seeking forgiveness from the victim. The scenarios for this study manipulated the presence or absence of transgressor shame, guilt, and spiritual focus. Analysis and discussion of the results from both studies are presented in an effort to more fully understand the cause and effect of seeking forgiveness.

**Bono**
In two studies, the authors investigated the associations between interpersonal forgiveness and psychological well-being. Cross-sectional and prospective multilevel analyses demonstrated that increases in forgiveness (measured as fluctuations in individuals' avoidance, revenge, and benevolence motivations toward their transgressors) were related to within-persons increases in psychological well-being (measured as more satisfaction with life, more positive mood, less negative mood, and fewer physical symptoms). Moreover, forgiveness was more strongly linked to well-being for people who reported being closer and more committed to their partners before the transgression and for people who reported that their partners apologized and made amends for the transgression. Evidence for the reverse causal model, that increases in well-being were related to increases in forgiveness, was also found. However, changes in feelings of closeness toward the partner appeared to account for the associations of forgiveness with well-being, but not vice versa.

**Brown**
Two studies investigated the associations between religious fundamentalism (RF) and aspects of dispositional forgiveness: pro-forgiveness attitudes and the tendency to forgive others. In Study 1, a direct self-report measure of RF was significantly associated with pro-forgiveness attitudes, but not with the tendency to forgive. In Study 2, we conceptually replicated these results by combining a measure of religiosity and a measure of need for structure, a cognitive style variable related to rigid, categorical thinking. A significant interaction between religiosity and need for structure revealed that the positive association between religiosity and pro-forgiveness attitudes was higher among respondents who were also high in need for structure. As expected, this pattern did not occur with the tendency to forgive, which was positively related to religiosity but negatively related to need for structure.
**Brown, Wohl, & Exline**

When a person or group is mistreated, those not directly harmed by the transgression might still experience antipathy toward offenders, leading to secondhand forgiveness dynamics similar to those experienced by firsthand victims. Three studies examine the role of social identification in secondhand forgiveness. Study 1 shows that the effects of apologies on secondhand victims are moderated by level of identification with the wronged group. Study 2 shows that identification with the United States was associated with less forgiveness and greater blame and desire for retribution directed at the 9/11 terrorists, and these associations were primarily mediated by anger. Finally, Study 3 shows that participants whose assimilation needs were primed were less forgiving toward the perpetrators of an assault on ingroup members than participants whose differentiation needs were primed, an effect that was mediated by empathy for the victims.

**Cehajic**

The present study examines the effects of contact and common-ingroup identification on intergroup forgiveness and outgroup behavioral tendencies. A sample of Bosnian Muslims (N=180) were asked to report their readiness to forgive the misdeeds committed by Bosnian Serbs during the 1992-95 war in Bosnia and Herzegovina. A path analysis of the presumed antecedents and consequences of forgiveness revealed that frequent and good quality contact with members from the perpetrator group predicted forgiveness (positively) and desire for social distance (negatively). Moreover, the positive relationship between contact and forgiveness was mediated by empathy and trust towards the outgroup and by perceived outgroup heterogeneity. Common-ingroup identification was also found to be positively associated with forgiveness and negatively with social distance towards the outgroup. Finally, intergroup forgiveness also predicted social distance from the outgroup. The theoretical and applied implications of these findings are discussed.

**Chiaramello**

Study 1 explored the factor structure of the disposition to seek forgiveness. Three factors were found that duplicated factors that had been shown to structure forgiveness: inability in seeking forgiveness; sensitivity to circumstances; and unconditional seeking of forgiveness. Study 2 was concerned with seeking forgiveness and granting forgiveness. Each factor in the seeking forgiveness model was positively and strongly associated with the corresponding factor in the granting forgiveness model. Inability into seek forgiveness was negatively associated with agreeableness, openness, and positively associated with paranoid tendencies. Unconditional seeking of forgiveness was positively associated with agreeableness.

**Cosgrove**

Although mental health professionals have attempted to specify the meaning of forgiveness, lack of consensus exists. Despite the lack of consensus over the meaning of forgiveness, there is agreement that forgiving is not forgetting or pardoning. However, the relationship between forgiving and forgetting has been undertheorized, and as a result, this relationship has not been empirically investigated. In this paper, we suggest that it would be fruitful to assess the meaning systems individuals associate with the definition of forgiveness. Focusing on the lived experience of individuals may help researchers and counselors avoid unhelpful dichotomizations such as "authentic vs. inauthentic" forgiveness. Implications for both research and mental health counseling are discussed.
In this paper we suggest that the effectiveness of many offender rehabilitation programs may be further enhanced by the inclusion of interventions that build on existing motivation to change. Taking the example of anger management interventions delivered within the context of violent offender rehabilitation, we propose that the emphasis on positive personal change implicit in therapies designed to promote forgiveness may hold some promise. Such therapies may be useful in so far as they facilitate the development of perspective-taking skills, and assist in the therapeutic management of shame and guilt in ways that are likely to be engaging for violent offenders.

Although the emotion of anger has, in recent years, been the subject of increasing theoretical analysis, there are relatively few accounts of how interventions designed to reduce problematic anger might be related to cognitively oriented theories of emotion. In this review of the literature we describe how a cognitive-behavioural approach to the treatment of those with anger-related problems might be understood in relation to conceptualizations of anger from a cognitive perspective. Three additional interventions (visual feedback, chair-work, forgiveness therapy) are identified that aim to improve the perspective-taking skills of angry clients. It is concluded that such interventions might be considered for use within the context of cognitive-behavioural treatment.

Two studies are utilized to investigate the efficacy of a forgiveness session with marital couples. Study 1 was a randomized clinical trial with 44 couples (N = 88 participants) comparing a forgiveness treatment group (n = 38); a problem-solving treatment group (n = 32); and a control group (n = 18). Study 2 was a study of the efficacy, from pre- to post-intervention of the forgiveness session with a select Christian group (N = 26 participants). The studies provide initial evidence that a three-hour forgiveness session, which utilizes a step-by-step decision-based approach, may increase forgiveness and marital satisfaction and decrease depression in marital couples.

This research identified several core beliefs about God and forgiveness in an evangelical, Baptist church sample (n = 44). Core beliefs (those endorsed at very high levels) focused on God's mercy and justice, Divine mandates to forgive others and to love one's enemies, a personal need for God's forgiveness, and belief that one's sins have been forgiven. Retributive beliefs were endorsed at very low levels. Participants generally believed that God forgives people only if they ask for forgiveness, although personal atonement for sin was seen as less necessary. Where unforgivable sins were listed, the vast majority focused on unbelief and rejection of God. Perhaps due to ceiling effects on core beliefs, only two beliefs predicted greater interpersonal forgiveness: "If I do not forgive others, God will not forgive me" and "God says that we must 'turn the other cheek'." Implications are discussed.
Exline, Baumeister, Zell, Kraft, & Witvliet
People are more forgiving toward transgressors if they see themselves as capable of committing similar offenses, as demonstrated in 7 studies. Methods included hypothetical scenarios, actual recalled offenses, individual and group processes, and correlational and experimental designs. Three factors mediated the link between personal capability and forgiveness: seeing the other's offense as less severe, greater empathic understanding, and perceiving oneself as similar to the transgressor. In terms of predicting forgiveness, it was important that people's own offenses were similar to the target offense in terms of both severity and type. The personal capability effect was independent of other established predictors of forgiveness and was more pronounced among men than women.

Finkel
Frequently, romantic relationships are effortless and pleasurable. Affection is deep, passion is strong, and laughter is pervasive. Unfortunately, most of us will on occasion be victims of partner transgressions within our long-term romantic relationships, and the survival and health of these relationships frequently depend upon our ability to forgive such transgressions. What factors predict whether or not a person will find their way to forgiveness? The scientific study of forgiveness has flourished in the past decade, offering several compelling answers to this question. This article reviews recent research establishing three factors that predict forgiveness tendencies: relationship commitment, narcissistic entitlement, and beliefs in romantic destiny.

Fife
Infidelity is one of the most common and the most difficult problems to treat in couples therapy. In this article, the authors present an integrative approach to treating infidelity based on the intersystems approach developed by Weeks. The approach integrates theory and techniques from both individual and systemic psychotherapy and addresses the individual, relational, and intergenerational factors associated with infidelity. The treatment approach reflects the authors' view of infidelity as a systemic, intimacy-based problem. Treatment includes five interrelated phases: (a) crisis management and assessment, (b) systemic considerations, (c) facilitating forgiveness, (d) treating factors that contribute to infidelity, and (e) promoting intimacy through communication. Of particular importance is the development of unifying factors that facilitate healing, unite couples, and reduce their vulnerability to future betrayals.
**Gobodo-Madikizela**

In this paper I explore the concept of forgiveness as a response to gross human rights violations. I present a conceptual examination of the effects of massive trauma in relation to what I refer to as the ‘unfinished business’ of trauma. Using a psychoanalytic framework, I consider the process of ‘bearing witness’ about trauma and examine how this process opens up the possibility of reciprocal expressions of empathy between victim and perpetrator. I then argue that, in this context of trauma testimony and witnessing, empathy is essential for the development of remorse on the part of perpetrators, and of forgiveness on the part of victims. Using a case study from South Africa's Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) I clarify the relationship between empathy and forgiveness, and show how the restorative model of the TRC can open up an ethical space and create the possibility of transformation for victims, perpetrators and bystanders. In my conclusion I suggest that forgiveness in politics is the only action that holds promise for the repair of brokenness in post-conflict societies, particularly if, as in South Africa, victims have to live together with perpetrators and beneficiaries in the same country.

**Gordon**

Infidelity is one of the most difficult problems to address in couple therapy, most likely because it involves a traumatic relationship event that alters the ways in which couples process information about each other and established behavioral patterns. This article presents a three-stage treatment designed to address the cognitive, behavioral, and emotional sequelae of affairs that integrates cognitive-behavioral and insight-oriented strategies with the literatures on traumatic response and forgiveness. Critical and unique features of this treatment are discussed and a case study is presented to illustrate the treatment methods.

**Green**

Building on attribution and interdependence theories, two experiments tested the hypothesis that close friends of victims (third parties) are less forgiving than the victims themselves (first parties). In Experiment 1, individuals imagined a scenario in which either their romantic partner or the romantic partner of a close friend committed the identical relationship offense. Third parties were less forgiving than first parties, a phenomenon we termed the *third-party forgiveness effect*. This effect was mediated by attributions about the perpetrator’s intentions and responsibility for the offense. In Experiment 2, first and third parties reported an actual offense and their subsequent unforgiving motivations. The third-party forgiveness effect was replicated and was mediated by commitment to the perpetrator. Perpetrator apology or amends to the victim increased third-party forgiveness. Future third-party research can expand interpersonal forgiveness research beyond the victim-perpetrator dyad.
Greenberg
This study compared the effectiveness of emotion-focused therapy (EFT) involving gestalt empty-chair dialogue in the treatment of individuals who were emotionally injured by a significant other with therapy in a psychoeducation group designed to deal with these injuries. In addition, this study examined aspects of the emotional process of forgiveness in resolving interpersonal injuries and investigated the relationship between letting go of distressing feelings and forgiveness. A total of 46 clients assessed as having unresolved, interpersonal, emotional injuries were randomly assigned to an individual therapy treatment of EFT or a psychoeducation group. Clients were assessed at pretreatment, posttreatment, and 3-month follow-up on measures of forgiveness, letting go, depression, global symptoms, and key target complaints. Results indicated that clients in EFT using empty-chair dialogue showed significantly more improvement than the psychoeducation treatment on all measures of forgiveness and letting go, as well as global symptoms and key target complaints.

Hall
This study examined the temporal course of self-forgiveness using 8 waves of data collected from 148 participants. Self-forgiveness increased linearly overtime, and fluctuations in 6 time-varying covariates were related to changes in self-forgiveness beyond those accounted for by the self-forgiveness trajectory. Decreases in guilt, perceived transgression severity, and conciliatory behavior toward a higher power were associated with increases in self-forgiveness. Increases in perceived forgiveness from the victim and a higher power and conciliatory behavior toward the victim were also related to increases in self-forgiveness. These findings suggest that self-forgiveness is a dynamic process associated with multiple factors and lend preliminary support to J.H. Hall and F.D. Fincham's (2005) theoretical model of self-forgiveness.

Kampf
Although the theme of forgiveness has been studied extensively in various fields of humanities and social science, it has thus far been neglected by discourse scholars. Drawing on data from the Israeli political discourse between 1997 and 2004, this article analyzes the ways in which apologies are interpreted and judged by political actors as members of a distinctive interpretive community. The findings show that although realized infelicitously, most of the apologies made by Israeli political figures were accepted by the offended parties or their representatives. One explanation for this finding is that the traditional felicity conditions are replaced in the political arena by the 'embarrassment condition', that is, the extent to which the gesture is perceived by the forgiver as threatening the apologizer's political image. Other reasons to forgive are less dependent on the judgment of the linguistic performance than on the various interests on the part of the forgiver. In cases in which the interest of the offended party is to detract from the symbolic power of his/her rival, even a full and humble apology may be refused. Inversely, even an incomplete form may be accepted if the offended is motivated to forgive. These findings are in line with Mills' argument regarding the total dependency of the apology on the way in which it is judged by its recipient.
Koutsos
This study examined a multi-factorial model of forgiveness in which personality of the offended party, disposition to forgive, and context-specific factors were examined as predictors of forgiveness in a specific situation. A community sample of adults (N = 128) was recruited from Australia and New Zealand. Regression analyses indicated that individuals scoring higher on agreeableness and spirituality, and lower on neuroticism, reported a greater disposition to forgive. Disposition to forgive mediated the relationship between individuals' agreeableness and their reported forgiveness in a specific situation. Factors that predicted unique variance in forgiveness of a specific offence were the offended party's disposition to forgive, the value they placed on the relationship with the transgressor, positive offender actions (e.g., listening, apologising, providing compensation), and expecting the transgressor to repeat the offence. The findings support the idea that interpersonal forgiveness involves the interplay of factors that are both intrinsic and extrinsic to individuals.

Knutson
The validity of the Process Model of Forgiveness (R. D. Enright, 2001) was examined by asking 82 adults to reflect and report on how they went about forgiving someone who had hurt them unfairly and deeply. Respondents' sequential ordering of the forgiveness process was compared with the theoretical ordering. Results showed moderate correlations between the participant derived and theoretically derived sequences. Although shown to be statistically valid, the model could benefit from revisions based on the participants' report of their own forgiveness experiences. (PsycINFO Database Record

Lawler-Row
Research has revealed that forgiveness may have beneficial effects for the forgiver's health. The present research explored whether reductions in anger underlie such effects, or whether forgiveness has beneficial health effects above and beyond the effects of decreasing anger. State and trait forgiveness were examined, along with styles of anger expression, for their relationship to physiological responses during recalled betrayal, and to self-reported health indices. State and trait forgiveness were negatively associated with anger-out; however, with one exception, no other styles of anger expression were linked with forgiveness. Both forgiveness and anger-out were associated with systolic blood pressure, heart rate and rate-pressure product. Partial correlations revealed that trait forgiveness accounted for significant variance in mean systolic blood pressure and rate-pressure product, and state forgiveness predicted mean heart rate, even after gender and anger-out had been controlled. On the other hand, anger-out fully mediated the trait forgiveness–heart rate and state forgiveness–rate pressure product effects. Trait forgiveness was significantly associated with fewer medications and less alcohol use, lower blood pressure and rate pressure product; state forgiveness was significantly associated with lower heart rate and fewer physical symptoms. Neither of these sets of findings were the result of decreased levels of anger-out being associated with forgiveness. These findings have important theoretical implications regarding the forgiveness–health link, suggesting that the benefits of forgiveness extend beyond the dissipation of anger.
**Lucken**
In the United States, over 600,000 offenders rejoin society annually, though little has been done to facilitate their transition from the prison to the community. Offender reentry into the workplace has emerged as a particular concern, given that many statutes prohibit public employment for ex-offenders and create obstacles to private-sector employment through occupational licensing requirements. These mandates may explicitly reject ex-offenders, or require “good moral character” or job/relationship tests that all but eliminate meaningful employment options. Several states are reconsidering the implications of these prohibitions, but a clear framework for assessing the validity of exclusionary occupational mandates is often lacking. This article proposes that the bona fide occupational qualification (BFOQ) defense found in employment discrimination law provides a helpful framework for guiding these reform efforts.

**Lundahl**
To investigate the impact of forgiveness interventions designed to help individuals who have suffered because of betrayals, offenses, or victimization. Forgiveness is believed to be a mechanism through which individuals can experience increases in hope and positive emotions and relief from negative emotions, cognitions, and behaviors. Method: Fourteen published reports of process-based forgiveness interventions that included a comparison group are meta-analyzed. Results/Conclusions: Samples that received forgiveness interventions forgave more (effect size [ES]=.82) and enjoyed increased positive affect (ES=.81) and self-esteem (ES=.60) and less negative affect (ES=.54). Such gains were largely maintained at follow-up periods. Individually delivered programs are superior to group delivery, and some forgiveness programs are superior to others. Further moderators are discussed.

**Maio**
Testing the idea that the process of forgiveness is intrinsically different across diverse relationships, this study examined the role of forgiveness in different family relationships. In 2 laboratory sessions 1 year apart, 114 families (each including 2 parents and 1 child) completed a new measure of family forgiveness and many individual-level, relationship-level, and family-level variables that have been previously linked with forgiveness. After validating the measure of family forgiveness in cross-sectional analyses, investigators performed longitudinal analyses to examine the role of forgiveness in each family relationship over the 1-year interval. Results indicated many important positive consequences of forgiveness on individual traits, aspects of each family relationship, and general family environment. However, there were also important asymmetries in associates of forgiveness across parent-child and parent-parent relationships, demonstrating the relationship-bound nature of forgiveness.
Maltby
The aim of the present study was to explore whether the domains and facets of the five-factor model of personality predicted motivational states for avoidance and revenge following a transgression at a second temporal point distant from the original transgression. A sample of 438 university students, who reported experiencing a serious transgression against them, completed measures of avoidance and revenge motivations around the transgression and five-factor personality domains and facets at time 1, and measures of avoidance and revenge motivations two and a half years later. The findings suggest that neuroticism, and specifically anger hostility, predicts revenge and avoidance motivations two and a half years later. Findings are discussed within McCullough's three systems of interpersonal forgiveness.

McMinn
Forgiveness and prayer are both topics of contemporary social science research, but they are not often considered together. The present study investigates how Christian respondents portray prayer when describing the process of interpersonal forgiveness. Just over half of the respondents mentioned prayer as an important part of forgiveness at their first opportunity in a structured interview protocol. Prayer responses were coded as inward, upward, or outward, with inward prayers being the most common. The narrative descriptions of inward prayer resemble Worthington's (2001, 2003) REACH model of the forgiveness process.

McNulty
The current longitudinal study examined the consequences of spouses' tendencies to forgive their partners over the first 2 years of 72 new marriages. Though positive main effects between forgiveness and marital outcomes emerged cross-sectionally, spouses' tendencies to forgive their partners interacted with the frequency of those partners' negative verbal behaviors to predict changes in marital outcomes longitudinally. Specifically, whereas spouses married to partners who rarely behaved negatively tended to remain more satisfied over time to the extent that they were more forgiving, spouses married to partners who frequently behaved negatively tended to experience steeper declines in satisfaction to the extent that they were more forgiving. Similar patterns emerged for changes in the severity of husbands' problems, such that husbands married to wives who frequently behaved negatively reported sharper increases in problem severity to the extent that they were more forgiving but reported more stable problem severity to the extent that they were less forgiving. These findings question whether all spouses should benefit from forgiveness interventions and thus highlight the need for further research on the most appropriate targets for such interventions.
Moore

Most research on aggressive driving has focused on identifying aspects of driver personality which will exacerbate it (e.g., sensation seeking, impulsiveness, driving anger, etc.). The present study was designed to examine two theoretically relevant but previously unexplored personality factors predicted to reduce the risk of aggressive driving: trait forgiveness and consideration of future consequences. The utility of these variables in predicting aggressive driving and driving anger expression was evaluated among 316 college student volunteers. Hierarchical multiple regressions permitted an analysis of the incremental validity of these constructs beyond respondent gender, age, miles driven per week, and driving anger. Both forgiveness and consideration of future consequences contributed to the prediction of aggressive driving and driving anger expression, independent of driving anger. Research on aggressive driving may be enhanced by greater attention to adaptive, potentially risk-reducing traits. Moreover, forgiveness and consideration of future consequences may have implications for accident prevention.

Noor

We examined social psychological factors contributing to the restoration of the intergroup relationship between Protestants and Catholics in Northern Ireland. A theoretical model of reconciliation orientation (ROM) was developed, with intergroup forgiveness and subjective evaluation of past violence as the main precursors of that orientation. Data from a Northern Irish sample (N = 318) validated and extended the model. Forgiveness and evaluation of past violence were predicted by 'competitive victimhood' (a belief in having suffered more than the out-group), negatively and positively, respectively. These associations were fully accounted for by the strength of identification with the in-group and trust in the out-group. Empathy functioned mainly as a direct predictor of forgiveness. The theoretical and practical implications of these results are discussed.

Oman

The authors evaluated the effects on stress, rumination, forgiveness, and hope of two 8-week, 90-min/wk training programs for college undergraduates in meditation-based stress-management tools. **Methods:** After a pretest, the authors randomly allocated college undergraduates to training in mindfulness-based stress reduction (MBSR; n = 15), Easwaran's Eight-Point Program (EPP; n = 14), or wait-list control (n = 15). The authors gathered pretest, posttest, and 8-week follow-up data on self-report outcome measures. **Results:** The authors observed no post-treatment differences between MBSR and EPP or between posttest and 8-week follow-up (p > .10). Compared with controls, treated participants (n = 29) demonstrated significant benefits for stress (p < .05, Cohen's d = -.45) and forgiveness (p < .05, d = .34) and marginal benefits for rumination (p < .10, d = -.34). **Conclusions:** Evidence suggests that meditation-based stress-management practices reduce stress and enhance forgiveness among college undergraduates. Such programs merit further study as potential health-promotion tools for college populations.
**Orathinkal, Vansteenwegen, & Burggraeve**
This cross-sectional study investigated the perception and motivation of forgiveness among 785 heterosexual married adults from the Flanders region in Belgium. A descriptive analysis showed that, in general, the respondents have a rather positive perception of forgiveness. In the second phase of the study, a t-test showed evidence of a significant difference between the positive perception of forgiveness of the first-married and remarried adults. But on a gender level, there was no difference either in the positive or in the negative scales. This study has shown that the general forgiveness has significant ($p < 0.001$) positive correlation with the perception of forgiveness.

**Orathinkal, Vansteenwegen, & Burggraeve (The Family Journal)**
The current study primarily investigates the effect of age, gender, education, employment status, number of children, and number of years in marriage on forgiveness of first-married and remarried adults. When corrected for marital status ($p < .005$) and gender ($p < .002$), there is a significant main effect of number of children on forgiveness. There are also significant main effects of gender on forgiveness when corrected for education ($p < .04$), number of children ($p < .003$), and length of marriage ($p < .01$). Women's forgiveness is found to be significantly higher than men ($p < .005$, one-tailed, $d = .20$). Number of children ($r = .092$, $p < .05$) and educational attainment of women ($r = .098$, $p < .05$) also indicated a significant positive association with forgiveness.

**Orth**
 Forgiveness is often assumed to be adaptive for psychological adjustment following interpersonal transgressions. Three hundred and forty seven individuals who had experienced a recent interpersonal transgression were surveyed on four occasions over the course of six weeks. Forgiveness was assessed with scales measuring interpersonal avoidance and revenge motivation and psychological adjustment was assessed with scales measuring depression and rumination. Latent growth curve analyses showed that intraindividual changes in forgiveness were positively correlated with changes in adjustment. Latent difference score analyses indicated that adjustment predicted subsequent change in forgiveness, but that forgiveness did not predict subsequent change in adjustment. The results suggest that adjustment facilitates forgiveness, but not that forgiveness facilitates adjustment.

**Paz**
The authors assessed forgiveness among Chinese ($n = 738$) and Western European ($n = 810$) participants using the Forgivingness Questionnaire (E. Mullet et al., 2003). They found that between the 2 samples, (a) the overall level of dispositional forgiveness was similar, (b) lasting resentment was higher among the Chinese than among the Western Europeans, and (c) sensitivity to the circumstances of the offense was higher among the Chinese than among the Western Europeans. These results contrast with what researchers have observed in previous studies in which forgiveness has been shown to be systematically higher in collectivistic cultures than in individualistic cultures. The authors suggest that there are possibly many other differences across cultures, namely in religion, that may impact views of forgiveness.
Philpot
Despite the increased incidence of intergroup apology in public life, very little empirical attention has been paid to the questions of whether intergroup apologies work and if so, why. In a series of experiments, Australians read scenarios in which Australian interests had been harmed by an outgroup. Participants were then told that the outgroup had either apologized or had not apologized for the offense. Although the presence of an apology helped promote perceptions that the outgroup was remorseful, and although participants were more satisfied with an apology than with no apology, the presence of the apology failed to promote forgiveness for the offending group. This was the case regardless of whether the effectiveness of apology was measured cross-sectionally (Experiment 1) or longitudinally (Experiment 2). It was also the case when the apology was accompanied by victims advocating forgiveness (Experiment 3) and was independent of the emotionality of the apology (Experiment 4). In contrast, individuals who apologized for intergroup atrocities were personally forgiven more than those who did not apologize (Experiment 4). Theoretical and applied implications are discussed.

Pratt
Adults' level of Eriksonian generativity in midlife has been shown to predict variations in parenting, but there has been less research on its relation to intergenerational processes in the three-generational family. As part of a larger study, a sample of 35 Canadian mothers and fathers described a particular, salient child-rearing problem with grandparents when their first-born children were 8 years old. Descriptions were rated for severity of the problem, anger/irritation, optimism about solution, and forgiveness of the grandparent's behavior. Generativity data were collected by a standard questionnaire (the Loyola Generativity Scale of McAdams; McAdams & de St. Aubin, 1992). Results showed few gender differences, though mothers tended to be angrier than fathers with the grandparents. More mature parents were more forgiving than younger parents and saw problems as less serious, as predicted. Finally, parent level of generativity predicted maternal and paternal forgiveness of grandparent behaviors, as well as paternal, but not maternal, optimism about problem outcomes. Parental generativity may thus serve to encourage greater forgiveness and optimism among the generations of the family.

Shepherd
The current study aimed to establish how trait forgiveness relates to broad personality factors as defined by the HEXACO model of personality, as opposed to the Big Five/Five-Factor models of personality. Since the HEXACO model differs from the Big Five model, different correlations were predicted to emerge, thus highlighting the importance of specific content in predicting trait forgiveness. Secondly, it was proposed that isolating cross-situationally consistent forgivers would lead to stronger correlations between forgiveness and various traits traditionally associated with trait forgiveness. The results found that Honesty-Humility, Agreeableness, and Emotionality, as well as various facets of the Extraversion and Conscientiousness factors, were related to trait forgiveness. Due to differences in content between the HEXACO and the Big Five, specific content relating to trait forgiveness could be identified. However, isolating consistent forgivers did not yield stronger correlations between personality and trait forgiveness.
Snyder
Intimate emotional and sexual relationships outside of marriage or a committed relationship occur with high frequency in both community and, particularly, clinical populations. Infidelity is the most frequently cited cause of divorce and is described by couple therapists as among the most difficult problems to treat. In this article, the authors describe a three-stage model for helping couples move past an affair, including (a) dealing with the initial impact, (b) exploring contributing factors and finding meaning, and (c) reaching an informed decision about how to move on—whether together or apart. This intervention draws on the theoretical and empirical literature regarding traumatic response as well as interpersonal forgiveness and incorporates empirically supported interventions from both cognitive-behavioral and insight-oriented approaches to treating couple distress. Preliminary empirical findings support the efficacy of this affair-specific intervention.

Stein
Background Legislation to establish a Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) was passed soon after election of South Africa's first democratic government. Discourse around the TRC focused on the importance of bearing witness to the past, and on the healing powers of forgiveness. However, there was also a concern that individuals with TRC relevant experience would simply be re-traumatized by participation in the process. To date, there has been little empirical data for either hypothesis. Methods A nationally representative survey of the South African population (n = 4,351) was undertaken 6-8 years after the TRC process began. Information about subjects' exposure to and participation in the TRC was collected, and views about the testimony of survivors and perpetrators were assessed. To determine the predictors of distress, anger, and forgiveness, linear regressions were undertaken with inclusion of demographic variables, exposure to TRC variables, and attitudes to the TRC. Results Distress was significantly associated with specific demographic factors (female gender, less education), with having a TRC-related experience to share, and with negative perceptions of the TRC (a negative view of survivors' testimony). Anger had similar associations but was also predicted by lower age. Forgiveness was associated with age and education, with being Coloured, and with having a positive view of perpetrator's testimony, while it was inversely associated with having a TRC experience to share. Distress and anger correlated inversely with forgiveness. Perceptions of the TRC were moderately positive irrespective of many demographic variables (race, education, age). Conclusion In this cross-sectional study, causal relationships are difficult to ascertain. Nevertheless, relationships between increased distress/anger, having a TRC relevant experience to share, and negative perceptions of the TRC, support a view that bearing testimony is not necessarily helpful to survivors. However, in the population as a whole, moderately positive attitudes towards the TRC across sociodemographic variables support a view that the TRC helped provide knowledge and acknowledgment of the past.
**Strelan**  
A 3 (justice prime: restorative, retributive, no prime) × 3 (contextual prime: criminal justice system, intimate relationship, workplace) experimental design was used with 173 participants reading hypothetical transgression scenarios to test the hypothesis that people associate forgiveness more with restorative justice than with retributive justice, and that such relationships hold regardless of the social context. As predicted, there were main effects for justice prime, with participants more likely to associate benevolent responding, and less likely to associate revenge and avoidant responses, with restorative justice than with retributive justice. They were also more likely to associate benevolence, and less likely to associate revenge and avoidant responses, with intimate relationships than with criminal justice and the workplace. Also as predicted, there was no interaction between justice and context for benevolence and revenge. Although one should be cautious about extrapolating from ‘no difference’ hypotheses, these results provide some indication that the forgiveness-justice relationship may be generalized beyond the criminal justice system.

**Struthers (2008)**  
Despite the oft-cited positive effects of an apology on forgiveness, forgiveness does not always follow. In three studies we tested the ironic notion that, following an interpersonal transgression, an apology following an attribution of intent might further hinder, rather than benefit, the forgiveness process. The findings of three studies were systematically replicated and supported our primary prediction that, following attributions of intent, saying sorry does not always lead to forgiveness. When offenders intentionally committed a transgression, forgiveness was less likely following an apology. However, when offenses were unintentional, forgiveness was more likely following an apology. We also showed that these effects were explained by participants' impression of the transgressor.

**Tam**  
Even after a conflict has formally ended, there is still a need for postconflict reconciliation and the building of mutual forgiveness and trust between communities. This article addresses psychological processes crucial to moving beyond a history of violent sectarian conflict in Northern Ireland. We investigated the predictors of intergroup forgiveness, in terms of intergroup emotions, infrahumanization, empathy, and intergroup contact. Intergroup trust and measures of implicit intergroup bias were also explored in this area of real intergroup conflict. The results are discussed in terms of their implications for postconflict reconciliation in Northern Ireland and other conflict areas.

**Thomas**  
We examined the effects of apology and gender on willingness to forgive or restore clergy following a sexual offense. In Study 1, men were more restoring than women were. Men were more forgiving of a female pastor who did not apologize, and women were more forgiving of a male pastor who did not apologize. In Study 2, we examined the effect of three features of apology (admission of guilt, excuse-making, and responsibility-taking), as well as influence of participant gender, on forgiveness. Women were more forgiving of a male pastor who took responsibility, and men were more forgiving of, a male pastor who did not take responsibility. We concluded with suggestions for research and practice.
**Toussaint & Williams**
The purpose of the present study was to examine differences in levels of several dimensions of forgiveness in Protestant, Catholic, and nonreligious groups. The sample included 1,087 nationally representative and randomly selected adults from the United States population. Protestant and Catholic groups showed higher levels of forgiveness of others, feeling forgiven by God, and seeking forgiveness as compared to the nonreligious group. No differences were observed on forgiveness of self. Additionally, the extent to which socio-demographic and religiousness/spirituality variables accounted for the differences in ratings of forgiveness was also examined. In sum, forgiveness differs based on religious affiliation, and personal religiousness and spirituality explain some of these differences. The beginning nature of this work is discussed and a brief research agenda is provided.

**Van Dyke**
This study investigated how the tendency to express forgiveness, purpose, and religiosity in a free-response essay relates to emotional intelligence and self-concept in 89 5th-graders (mean age = 10.84 years) from an urban public school district in New Jersey. Readers coded essays for expressions of forgiveness, purpose, and religiosity using originally developed rubrics. These data were compared with self-reports on scales of emotional intelligence and self-concept. It was hypothesized that expressions of the predictor variables would correlate positively with emotional intelligence and self-concept. In contrast to expressions of purpose, which were common among students, expressions of forgiveness and religiosity were infrequent. Furthermore, forgiveness was not significantly related to either criterion variable; purpose was positively related to self-concept (but not to emotional intelligence); and religiosity was negatively related to emotional intelligence (but not to self-concept). Correlational analyses by gender revealed a possible trend toward more robust relationships being observed among females than males; however, the differences between the correlation coefficients observed among males and females failed to reach statistical significance. Several of the study's unanticipated findings suggest the need for further empirical work investigating the psychological correlates of these constructs in children.

**vanOyen Witvliet**
We examined the religious commitment levels of 57 (27 M, 30 F) self-identified Christian young adults in the context of considering an unresolved injustice. Religious commitment was unrelated to self-reported dispositional anger, but positively associated with higher dispositional interpersonal forgiveness and lower rumination. When imagining a property crime and its unresolved aftermath, greater religious commitment was associated with the inhibition of revenge-seeking and cultivation of empathy and forgiveness (dependent on measurement timing). Greater religious commitment was also associated with higher blood pressure reactivity in the aftermath of the unresolved crime. Limitations of this exploratory study are addressed, along with possible interpretations, which might inform follow-up studies.
Vasalou

Online offences are generally considered as frequent and intentional acts performed by a member with the aim to deceive others. However, an offence may also be unintentional or exceptional, performed by a benevolent member of the community. This article examines whether a victim's decrease in trust towards an unintentional or occasional offender can be repaired in an online setting, by designing and evaluating systems to support forgiveness. We study which of three systems enable the victim of a trust breakdown to fairly assess this kind of offender. The three systems are: (1) a reputation system, (2) a reputation system with a built-in apology forum that may display the offender's apology to the victim and (3) a reputation system with a built-in apology forum that also includes a 'forgiveness' component. The 'forgiveness' component presents the victim with information that demonstrates the offender's trustworthiness as judged by the system. We experimentally observe that systems (2) and (3), endorsing apology and supporting forgiveness, allow victims to recover their trust after online offences. An apology from the offender restores the victim's trust only if the offender cooperates in a future interaction; it does not alleviate the trust breakdown immediately after it occurs. By contrast, the 'forgiveness' component restores the victim's trust directly after the offence and in a subsequent interaction. The applicability of these findings for extending reputation systems is discussed.

Wade, Johnson, & Meyer

A new area in psychotherapy practice and research has arisen addressing therapeutic interventions to explicitly promote forgiveness. There is wide variation in the response to this new area including enthusiastic acceptance, wary openness, and vigorous opposition. Unfortunately, these reactions are not often based on a thorough understanding of the empirical literature and result in concerns about using forgiveness interventions in therapy that may or may not be warranted. The authors identify these potential concerns, framing them as concerns about the impact on clients, concerns related to therapist skill or knowledge, and concerns about the effect on the therapy process. The authors address these concerns with a review of the relevant research on forgiveness in therapy. Based on this review, the authors conclude that some skepticism of the new "forgiveness interventions" is warranted, although serious consideration needs to be given to these interventions at appropriate times.

Wade, Vogel, Liao, Goldman

The tendency to ruminate has been consistently linked to psychological disturbances, such as increased stress, anger, and fear in response to provocations. However, existing measures of rumination focus on the disposition to ruminate rather than on rumination about a specific situation. This limits the ability to explore rumination about a specific situation and makes the assessment of change as a result of time, contextual factors, or psychological interventions difficult. Across three samples, including a clinical sample, the reliability and validity of the Rumination About an Interpersonal Offense scale (RIO) was examined. Exploratory and confirmatory factor analyses provided support for a unidimensional structure. Internal consistency and test-retest reliabilities were adequate. Convergent and discriminant validity were also supported.
**Wallace**

Benefits of forgiveness have been well documented, but past research has not directly addressed the crucial question of whether forgiveness deters or invites repeat transgressions. Our research indicates that expressing forgiveness typically discourages future offenses. In Study 1, participants playing a form of the prisoner's dilemma game were more likely to repeat their transgressions against unforgiving victims than forgiving victims, especially when victims had no chance to retaliate. In response to a hypothetical scenario presented in Study 2, participants reported that they would be less likely to risk offending someone for a second time if that person had forgiven their first offense. In Study 3, participants' autobiographical recollections of their prior transgressions revealed that receiving forgiveness predicted higher repentance motivation.

**Webb**

The present study examined relationships between the variables of depression, shame, guilt, psychological maltreatment, and dispositional forgiveness. The methodology included the completion of questionnaires by 280 university and community college participants. Results indicated that all factors of dispositional forgiveness were negatively related to depression, to shame, and to all factors of psychological maltreatment. Partial correlations further revealed positive associations between guilt and dispositional forgiveness. Hierarchical multiple regression analyses demonstrated the unique contribution of psychological maltreatment to dispositional forgiveness beyond that of depression, shame, and guilt. Implications of results for clinical practice and future research are discussed.

**Welch**

Drama, like nursing, concerns itself with the human condition and finds its resonance in an empathetic response to the person-to-person connection. As part of their clinical experience in the mental health component of their undergraduate nursing course, 80 student nurses attended the play Bearing Witness written by the authors and produced as a joint Faculty production between the Faculty of Nursing and the Department of Drama at the University of Alberta, Edmonton, Canada. The play charts and interweaves the paths to healing of two people following incestuous abuse for one, and political torture for the other, and poses questions to the audience concerning the intent and effects of abuse, and the place and value of forgiveness and forgiving. Some 4-5 months afterwards the students were invited to participate in hour-long, semi-structured interviews to investigate the persistent impressions of the play, the students' perceptions of the themes and relevance and the effect of the play on their learning and development as nurses. The seven students who took part in the interviews expressed that their feelings of empathy and identification with the situation of the characters in the play had a greater impact on their learning than other methods of instruction they had evaluated, particularly in terms of the persistence and processing of the subjective experience. Other notable themes were that of forgiveness, its value in healing and the implications for nursing, and an appreciation of the 'spiritual component' of the total learning experience.
Welton
In response to a call for more in vivo research on forgiveness, domestic couples (N = 126 adults; 63 pairs of disputants), who were in the process of terminating their relationships and who were referred by city or family court to a mediation center to work out the terms of their separation, were studied. At the completion of the mediation hearing, individuals completed measures of empathy, cognitive perspective taking, and anger. They also completed three measures of forgiveness, each with a unique focus. Results indicated that empathy was a significant predictor of forgiveness in all three measures, but that perspective taking and anger predicted forgiveness with some measures but not with others. The use of multiple measures of forgiveness may help to triangulate constructs and relationships in future forgiveness research.

Witvliet
This experiment assessed the emotional self-reports and physiology of justice outcomes and forgiveness responses to a common crime, using a three Justice (retributive, restorative, no justice) × 2 Forgiveness (forgiveness, none) repeated-measures design. Participants (27 males, 29 females) imagined their residence was burglarized, followed by six counterbalanced justice-forgiveness outcomes. Imagery of justice--especially restorative--and forgiveness each reduced unforgiving motivations and negative emotion (anger, fear), and increased prosocial and positive emotion (empathy, gratitude). Imagery of granting forgiveness (versus not) was associated with less heart rate reactivity and better recovery; less negative emotion expression at the brow (corrugator EMG); and less aroused expression at the eye (lower orbicularis oculi EMG when justice was absent). When forgiveness was not imagined, justice-physiology effects emerged: signs of cardiovascular stress (rate pressure products) were lower for retributive versus no justice; and sympathetic nervous system responding (skin conductance) was calmer for restorative versus retributive justice.

Wohl
Although considerable empirical attention has recently focused on forgiveness, less work has been done on examining self-forgiveness. A major stumbling block for self-forgiveness research has been the lack of a measure to assess self-forgiveness for specific transgressions. This article reports the development of the State Self-Forgiveness Scales and the test of a model of self-forgiveness' relation to psychological well-being in the context of the unwanted end of a romantic relationship. In Study 1, factor analysis revealed a 2-factor structure to the self-forgiveness data. Study 2 found that self-blame predicted depressive affect to the extent that participants forgave the self. The implications of state self-forgiveness for both basic research and therapy are discussed.