Measuring interpersonal forgiveness in late adolescence and middle adulthood

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The construct of interpersonal forgiveness is operationalized and tested
with 197 college students and 197 of their same-gender parents in the
Midwestern United States. The Enright Forgiveness Inventory (EFI)
showed strong internal consistency reliability. The EFI correlates
significantly and negatively with anxiety particularly when a person is
experiencing deep hurt in a developmentally relevant area. Age differences
also were observed. Particularly when the hurt concerns a developmentally
relevant area, college students are less forgiving and have more anxiety
than their same-gender parents. The EFI thus appears to have sound
psychometric properties.

INTRODUCTION

The field of moral development has broadened recently from its traditional
Kohlbergian emphasis on justice to include other constructs such as caring
(Gilligan *et al.*, 1988; Brabeck, 1989) and forgiveness (Enright and the Human
Development Study Group, 1991). The utility of forgiveness has been
recognized recently by physicians working with cancer patients (Phillipps and
Osborne, 1989) and by therapists interested in anger reduction in clients
(Kaufman, 1984; Fitzgibbons, 1986; Hope, 1987). Al-Mabuk (1990) has argued
that late adolescence is a particularly important period to study forgiveness
because of individuation issues; it is a time of looking back and so past hurts
may become poignant and forgiveness may be a solution to overcoming such
hurts. Despite the recent accolades in applied communities, we are only
beginning to develop a knowledge base in this potentially useful area of moral

development. Our purpose here is to describe a pioneering attempt to construct a measure of psychological forgiveness. The measure is intended for both basic research and applied settings in which forgiveness is involved.

A working definition of forgiveness, drawn principally from North (1987), is this. In forgiving, a person overcomes resentment toward an offender, but does not deny him/herself the moral right to such resentment. The forgiver tries to have a new stance of benevolence, compassion, and even love toward the offender, even though the latter has no moral right to such a merciful response. The important points of this definition are as follows: (a) one who forgives has suffered a deep hurt, thus showing a negative response; (b) the offended person has a moral right to certain negative responses such as resentment, but overcomes them nonetheless; (c) a new response to the other accrues, including compassion and love; (d) this loving response occurs despite the realization that there is no *obligation* to love the offender.

Enright *et al.* (1991), using the basic premises of North, expanded the definition of forgiveness. While North acknowledges changes in the forgiver's affect toward an offender, Enright *et al.* (1991) also included judgments (how the forgiver *thinks* about the offender) and behavior (how the forgiver *acts* toward the offender) in the forgiveness process.

It also should be noted that North acknowledges two psychological characteristics of a forgiver's affect: a cessation of *negative* affect (resentment, anger) and the presence of *positive* affect (compassion, love). The same can hold for judgments or cognitive components. There is the cessation of condemning judgments and the presence of more positive judgments (Enright *et al.*, 1991). There also can be the cessation of negative behaviors (revenge, for example) and the presence of positive behaviors (helpfulness, overtures toward reconciliation). In sum, as Enright *et al.* (1991) describe, a psychological response that is forgiveness includes six components: absence of negative affect, judgment, and behavior toward an offender and the presence of positive affect, judgment, and behavior toward the same offender. These occur in the face of deep, unfair hurt.

Forgiveness is a controversial topic, with at least 11 philosophical arguments stating that interpersonal forgiveness is unwise (see Enright *et al.*, 1991). Perhaps the most typical argument against forgiveness is that it leaves the forgiver open to further abuse. This, however, is an invalid argument against forgiveness because it confuses reconciliation and forgiveness. Forgiveness, as seen in the above definition, is *one person*'s stance toward another. Reconciliation occurs when *two people* come together in a behavioral way. Genuine reconciliation requires that *both parties* do their part in respecting the other. In the case of continual abuse from an offender, a forgiver can realize that the other still does not want or cannot offer respect, and under such circumstances does not reconcile. A forgiver, however, can still reduce negative

and increase positive responses toward the other and wait in the hope that the other changes. Forgivers are not blind to another's faults and certainly take steps to protect themselves. In fact, forgiveness is a form of protection against hatred and resentment that can increase anxiety or depression within oneself (Hope, 1987). It has been argued that most attacks on forgiveness revolve around faulty definitions of forgiveness itself (Enright *et al.*, 1992).

To develop and validate a measure of interpersonal forgiveness we tried to generate as simple a scale format as possible, with the intent of eventually bringing the scale to diverse cultures. Validation measures included the following: depression, anxiety, religiosity, and social desirability scales, and a one-item forgiveness question. Depression and anxiety were included because, in theory, as counsellors Hope (1987) and Fitzgibbons (1986) report, clients who forgive deep injustices demonstrate a decrease in anxiety and depression. Two pilot studies have empirically demonstrated the relationship between forgiveness (as described here) and these variables (Al-Mabuk, 1990; Hebl, 1990). Religiosity was included because forgiveness as a construct has been more intensively explored in religious circles, both in ancient times and now, than in other areas (Enright *et al.*, 1991). Perhaps, then, the more religious are the more forgiving. Social desirability was included to minimize faking as much as possible by eliminating those forgiveness items that have a significant relation with social desirability.

METHODS

Participants

A total of 394 participants (204 females and 190 males) provided data for the analyses reported below. Half the participants were late adolescent college students, and the other half were their same-gender parents. The average age within the adolescent group was 22·1 (s.d.=4·7) and within the parent sample was 49·6 (s.d.=9·6). All college students were from a larger public university in the Midwestern United States. Late adolescents were chosen because previous research suggested that clarity in understanding forgiveness emerges after the high school years (Enright *et al.*, 1989). College students and their same-gender parents were chosen to standardize as much as possible relative social class standing, and to make more accurate developmental comparisons possible.

Instruments

The following questionnaires were given to each participant: the Enright Forgiveness Inventory (EFI), a background information scale, Spielberger

State-Trait Anxiety Scale, Beck Depression Inventory (BDI), a religiosity index, Crowne–Marlowe Social Desirability Scale, and a one-item forgiveness question.

Enright Forgiveness Inventory
Potential items for the EFI were generated by a panel of faculty and graduate students. All were versed in the psychology and philosophy of forgiveness, and one was a specialist in measurement. Items were created to assess the six areas noted above: absence of negative affect (NA), presence of positive affect (PA), absence of negative cognition (NC), presence of positive cognition (PC), absence of negative behavior (NB), presence of positive behavior (PB) all toward the offending person. The panel generated 25 potential items per area (150 items total), each representing a specific situation that might occur under the given condition (e.g. "I think of ways to get even" assessed the presence of negative cognitions about the offender). Participants focused on a particular experience of someone hurting them and responded to each statement on a 6-point scale of agreement-disagreement, which is scored so that larger values indicate a more forgiving response. Items for the final form of the EFI were selected from the pool of 150 items on the basis of high correlation with the appropriate affect, cognition or behavior subscale score and low correlation with a social desirability measure. The final form contains 60 items evenly divided among the six areas noted above. The range of scores for the 60-item form is from 60 to 360 (10–60 within each of the six subscales).

Prior to considering the forgiveness items each participant was asked on the EFI to think of the *most recent* experience of someone hurting you *deeply* and *unfairly*. Next, the person rated the degree of hurt on a 1 (no hurt) to 5 (a great deal of hurt) scale. They then reported who hurt them (friend, spouse, employer, and so forth). The person then responded to the following: is the person living? How long ago was the offense (in days, weeks, months or years)? He or she then briefly described the offense.

The word "forgiveness" was not mentioned anywhere in the scale. In fact, the EFI was simply labelled "Attitude Scale". The first 50 items comprised the *Affect* subscales, in which all 50 positive and negative items were presented together (I feel warm, repulsed, caring toward the other, as three separate examples). The *Behavior* subscales (50 items) were next (Regarding the person, I do or would show friendship, avoid, help, as three separate examples), followed by the *Cognition* subscales (50 items) (I think he or she is: worthy of respect, corrupt, an annoyance, as three separate examples).

Eight additional items were given at the end of the scale. Five assessed pseudo-forgiveness (Hunter, 1978; Augsburger, 1981). Pseudo-forgiveness here includes denial and condonation. We included these because a person who sees no problem certainly may express a "forgiving" attitude toward an "offender"

because the deep hurt is masked. We eliminated a respondent's data, and his or her matched parent or college student, when the pseudo-forgiveness score was 20 or higher. The minimal cut-off indicates an agreement with the pseudo-forgiveness statements.

The other three items were repeated from the EFI as a consistency check. There was one item each repeated from the three 50-item subscales. An inconsistency was defined as a response not being on the same side (agree or disagree) as the original rating of the item. Two inconsistencies eliminated that participant's data (and same-gender match) from analysis. Nine pairs were eliminated through these procedures.

Background information
This questionnaire asked for the demographics of age, gender, educational level, and religious affiliation.

Speilberger State-Trait Anxiety Scale
This is a 40-item self-report scale measuring one's immediate *state* of anxiety and the more pervasive *trait* of anxiety (Spielberger *et al.*, 1983). Each statement is rated on a 4-point Likert scale. Separate State (how one feels now) and Tait (how one usually feels) subscales, each ranging from 20 to 80, are calculated as well as a Total Anxiety Score (40=low to 160=high anxiety). This is a widely used, valid instrument.

Beck Depression Inventory
This is a 21-item self report scale of psychological depression (Beck and Steer, 1987). We eliminated item 21 dealing with sexuality because its inclusion would not be appropriate for some cultures in which we were data-gathering. There is precedence in the published literature for eliminating this item (Reynolds and Coates, 1986). The scale ranges from 0 (low depression) to 60 (high depression). This, too, is widely used and valid.

Religiosity scale
We generated a 7-item Likert scale (1=little, to 5=much) concerning religious practice or behavior (How often do you go to a place of worship?; how often do you pray or meditate?).

Crowne–Marlowe Social Desirability Scale
This is a 33-item, true–false inventory that assesses the degree to which a person is "faking good" on test items (Crowne and Marlowe, 1960).

One-item forgiveness question

This was a validity check on the EFI. It was worded as follows: to what extent have you forgiven the person you rated on the *Attitude Scale* [EFI]? It was rated on a 5-point Likert scale from "not at all" to "complete forgiveness".

Testing methods

Each participant individually filled out the questionnaires. College students were tested in groups of about 10–20. The students gave the packets of materials to the parents. When this was not possible we mailed the packets to the parents. A detailed set of instructions for individual administration was provided to all participants. The questionnaires were randomly ordered for each participant. The only exception is that the one-item forgiveness question was always given as the last question in the packet. This was done to avoid entirely the direct mention of "forgiveness" throughout testing.

RESULTS

Item selection in the EFI

The final affect, cognition, and behavior subscales of the EFI were constructed by selecting items having high correlation with the corresponding subscale score and low correlation with the Crowne–Marlowe Social Desirability Scale, with the added constraint that half the items selected for each subscale be positive and the other half negative in connotation. For example, 10 positive and 10 negative affect items were selected from the potential item pool of 50 affect items. The selected affect items each correlated above +0·75 with the affect subscale score based on 50 items, and each correlated below +0·10 with the social desirability measure. Items for the cognition and behavior subscales were selected in the same way. Thus, the current, experimental form of the EFI contains 60 items representing both positive and negative affect, cognition, and behavior. Each selected item correlates above +0·65 with its respective subscale score based on 50 items and correlates below +0·17 with the Crowne–Marlowe Social Desirability Scale.

Basic Statistics and Reliability of the EFI

Means, standard deviations, and Cronbach's alpha of internal consistency coefficients associated with the various scales of the EFI are as follows: 10-item Positive Affect subscale ($\bar{x}=36\cdot73$, s.d.$=14\cdot14$, $\alpha=0\cdot96$), 10-item Negative Affect subscale ($\bar{x}=39\cdot60$, s.d.$=13\cdot97$, $\alpha=0\cdot95$), 10-item Positive Behavior subscale

($\bar{x}=43\cdot89$, s.d.$=12\cdot76$, $\alpha=0\cdot96$), 10-item Negative Behavior subscale ($\bar{x}=43\cdot12$, s.d.$=11\cdot71$, $\alpha=0\cdot93$), 10-item Positive Cognition subscale ($\bar{x}=45\cdot18$, s.d.$=12\cdot16$, $\alpha=0\cdot96$), 10-item Negative Cognition subscale ($\bar{x}=48\cdot02$, s.d.$=11\cdot76$, $\alpha=0\cdot95$), 20-item Total Affect (Positive and Negative Affect combined) ($\bar{x}=76\cdot34$, s.d.$=27\cdot06$, $\alpha=0\cdot97$), 20-item Total Behavior subscale (Positive and Negative Behavior combined) ($\bar{x}=87\cdot02$, s.d.$=23\cdot24$, $\alpha=0\cdot97$), 20-item Total Cognition subscale (Positive and Negative Cognition combined) ($\bar{x}=93\cdot20$, s.d.$=23\cdot11$, $\alpha=0\cdot97$), and the entire 60-item EFI Total ($\bar{x}=256\cdot55$, s.d.$=69\cdot43$, $\alpha=0\cdot98$). $N=394$ in each case.

All scales obviously possess a high degree of internal consistency. In fact, it appears that each item functions as a slight variation on the singular theme of forgiveness. However, these alpha coefficients are upper bounds, in the sense that they are based on the sample data used to select the items, i.e. the data for which the items had optimal statistical properties. Alpha coefficients based on other samples are likely to be somewhat lower.

Basic statistics for the other measures

The means, standard deviations, and Cronbach's alpha of internal consistency for all other measures are as follows: total Anxiety scale ($\bar{x}=74\cdot54$, s.d.$=19\cdot55$, $\alpha=0\cdot95$), the 20-item Trait Anxiety ($\bar{x}=37\cdot94$, s.d.$=9\cdot95$, $\alpha=0\cdot92$), 20-item State Anxiety ($\bar{x}=36\cdot60$, s.d.$=11\cdot04$, $\alpha=0\cdot93$), depression ($\bar{x}=5\cdot85$, s.d.$=4\cdot95$, $\alpha=0\cdot81$), religiosity ($\bar{x}=18\cdot48$, s.d.$=6\cdot78$, $\alpha=0\cdot86$), and social desirability ($\bar{x}=14\cdot93$, s.d.$=5\cdot54$, $\alpha=0\cdot79$). $N=394$ in each case.

Test–retest on forgiveness

A small-scale study ($N=36$) of the EFI's test–retest reliability over a 4-week interval with college students was done (see Table 1). The test–retest reliability coefficients are strong, yet smaller than the alpha coefficients in our larger sample for a number of reasons. For example, participants' forgiveness scores may vary over time due to true change in attitude as well as random error, which will reduce the correlation between the two test administrations. The outcomes of this study are encouraging.

Validity of the EFI

Correlations among the EFI's final affect, cognition, and behavior subscales are substantial ($0\cdot80$–$0\cdot87$); thus there is ample justification for creating an EFI total score by summing the subscales. However, the individual subscales also appear to have value for studying further the concept and process of forgiveness.

For example, note the difference between subscale means as reported earlier, especially the mean for affect which is lower than the other subscales.

As previously mentioned, at the conclusion of the data collection procedure, participants responded on a 5-point scale to the following item: "To what extent have you forgiven the person rated on the Attitude Scale" (EFI)? Direct evidence that the EFI total score measures the intended construct is provided by the substantial Pearson correlation (0·68) with this item (Affect subscale = 0·68, Behavior=0·64, and Cognition=0·60 with the forgiveness item). These correlations are especially impressive given the fact that the reliability of this single Likert item is probably about 0·50, which places an upper bound of about 0·70 on its correlation with other variables. Incidentally, enhanced reliability and correlations, with other variables, are important reasons for using a collection of items, such as the EFI, to measure forgiveness rather than a single forgiveness item.

The EFI Total score has a near zero correlation (−0·001) (Affect=−0·01, Behavior=0·02, and Cognition=0·02) with the Crowne–Marlowe Social Desirability Scale, as expected. Thus, responses to EFI items are not substantially influenced by the social desirability response set. By design, any such items were identified and eliminated via the item analysis procedure used in constructing the EFI scales.[1]

Relation of forgiveness to anxiety
The published literature, as previously stated, suggests a link between forgiveness and anxiety in that people who experience serious interpersonal injustice and who do not forgive are high in anxiety (Fitzgibbons, 1986). We present 16 correlational tests of this relationship in Table 2. We separated the samples to explore more directly the relation of forgiveness and anxiety within the late adolescent sample in particular. To reduce the number of tests, we centered on State Anxiety specifically because this indicates how the person is feeling now, while considering the one who hurt him or her deeply and unfairly.

Furthermore, we decided to center only on *developmentally appropriate* hurts for each age group. An important task (and the most frequently reported area of

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[1]Despite the very high internal consistency, which might suggest that there are no valid subscales within the EFI, matched-pairs *t*-tests across these subsales do indicate meaningful differences among them. We did nine matched-pairs *t*-test comparisons: negative *vs.* positive affect, negative *vs.* positive cognition, negative *vs.* positive behavior, all pairwise negative subscales, all pairwise positive subscales. Of the nine comparisons, all were statistically significant for the full sample ($N=394$). Because we in all likelihood have too much statistical power here, we reduced the sample to only those reporting a great deal of hurt ($N=117$). With this sample, seven of the nine comparisons were significant with a two-tailed test. Means are available from the second author upon request. The findings indicate that people tend not to let go very easily of negative affect or to express positive affect toward the one who hurt them. They tend to eliminate negative judgments toward an offending person most easily.

Table 1. *Test–retest statistics for scales of the Enright Forgiveness Inventory (EFI)*

Scale	Items	Mean		S.D.		Correlation
		Time 1	Time 2	Time 1	Time 2	
Positive affect	10	33·69	36·17	13·19	12·26	0·82
Negative affect	10	36·22	40·08	12·22	12·17	0·74
Total affect	20	69·91	76·25	24·38	23·44	0·81
Positive behavior	10	40·72	42·44	9·88	11·62	0·88
Negative behavior	10	41·42	44·53	10·90	9·43	0·67
Total behavior	20	82·14	86·97	18·54	19·49	0·79
Positive cognition	10	44·17	44·97	11·02	10·58	0·90
Negative cognition	10	48·56	49·47	10·87	9·69	0·89
Total cognition	20	92·73	94·44	20·38	19·34	0·91
EFI Total	60	244·78	257·66	59·30	59·16	0·86

This is for a sample of 36 college students. There was a 4-week interval between testings.

Table 2. *Correlation between forgiveness and state anxiety*

Scale	Respondents reporting any degree of hurt in the developmentally appropriate area		Respondents reporting deep hurt in the developmentally appropriate area	
	Parent†	Student‡	Parent§	Student||
Positive affect	−0·41*	−0·31*	−0·35, n.s.	−0·56*
Negative affect	−0·53*	−0·28*	−0·60*	−0·47*
Total affect	−0·48*	−0·30*	−0·49*	−0·53*
EFI total	−0·43*	−0·30*	−0·37, n.s.	−0·44*

*$p<0.01$.
†Parents hurt by spouse ($N=44$).
‡Students hurt by opposite-gender friend ($N=85$).
§Parents deeply hurt by family member ($N=34$).
\|\|Students deeply hurt by opposite-gender friend ($N=29$).

hurt) within the college sample is in navigating through male–female relationships. Those reporting any degree of hurt in this area ($N=85$) and those reporting a great deal of hurt ($N=29$) were chosen. In addition to EFI total scores, we focused on the affect subscale (both positive and negative) because clinicians' reports are that it is the residual anger or hatred left over in

unforgiveness that is debilitating. As can be seen in Table 2, the adolescents' negative relation between forgiveness and anxiety becomes substantially stronger in the face of *deep* hurt. College students with severe hurt over an opposite gender friendship who do not forgive via their *feelings* have high state anxiety. Those who do forgive by releasing negative affect and increasing positive affect toward the one who hurt them have reduced anxiety.

An important developmental task (and the most frequently reported area of hurt) within the middle adult sample is in navigating through relationships with spouse, and within a family context (with spouse, children, parents, and relatives). We were hoping to examine the forgiveness/state anxiety relations here with spouse only, but when we selected for *deep* hurt, the N was too small. We, thus, report the Pearson correlation with spouse *regardless of hurt* ($N=44$) and with family members in general in the context of *deep hurt* ($N=34$). As can be seen, both are in the moderate range for the most part. The r-values did not increase when we selected for deep hurt (as within the college sample) because the target offender, out of statistical necessity, shifted from spouse to more inclusive family members. Yet, the pattern is clear: those who forgive tend to have lower state anxiety. We should be cautious with all of the above relations until replication occurs because the N falls from a high of 85 to a low of 29 in these comparisons.

Age group comparisons between forgiveness and anxiety

The moral judgment literature suggests that forgiveness is developmental (Piaget, 1932/1965; Enright *et al.*, 1989; Enright and the Human Development Study Group, 1994). Our expectation was that as people gain maturity, they may be more willing to forgive a deep offense against them. We tried to eliminate as many confounding factors as we could in our developmental analysis by choosing to match college students with their same-gender biological parent. We also tried to control differences in educational level, degree of hurt experienced, and time since the reported hurt in a 2×2 (college *vs.* parent and male *vs.* female) analysis of co-variance design.

Further, we chose those areas of hurt that were particularly developmentally appropriate for each group. We retained only those college students who experienced hurt within a male–female friendship (the most frequently occurring category for this age group). We retained only those parents who experienced hurt within their relationships with spouse or child (also the most frequently occurring category for this age group).

The analysis of co-variance with the EFI total score as the dependent variable showed a significant main effect for age group $F_{(1,154)}=7\cdot23$, $p<0\cdot008$. The $\bar{x}$ EFI total score for college was $273\cdot21$ (S.D.$=62\cdot42$, $N=85$); the $\bar{x}$ for parents was

292·87 (s.d.=60·08, N=78). No significant gender or interaction effects were observed.

Because the Affect subscales showed the lowest scores of all the subscales, we performed the above ANCOVA within Negative Affect and again had statistical significance for age group, $F_{(1,154)}$=6·84, p<0·01, and for Positive Affect $F_{(1,154)}$= 6·47, p<0·02. In both cases the college students ($\bar{x}$=41·84, s.d.=14·50 for Negative; $\bar{x}$=40·32, s.d.=13·17 for Positive Affect) showed more negative and less positive affect toward an offending other than did their parents ($\bar{x}$=46·22, s.d.=12·72 for Negative; $\bar{x}$=44·44, s.d.=12·99 for Positive Affect).

Because forgiveness is developmental and related to anxiety, it follows that anxiety itself may show age differences. Using the same ANCOVA design, we see that anxiety (State and Trait combined), in fact, does differ between the age groups, $F_{(1,154)}$=5·10, p<0·03. The college students ($\bar{x}$=78·92, s.d.=20·36, N= 85) are more anxious than their parents ($\bar{x}$=70·42, s.d.=20·17, N=78). Spielberger *et al.* (1983) give percentile ranks for college students and 40–49-year-old working adults. The college students in this subsample are between the 58th and 68th percentile, while the adults are between the 50th and 65th percentile, suggesting heightened anxiety in both groups.

The above analyses suggest that when there is self-reported interpersonal hurt *within developmentally normative relationships* that those in later adolescence have a harder time navigating through those difficulties. They are less forgiving and more anxious.

Relation of forgiveness to depression
We had a statistical artifact in this sample: virtually no variability in the depression scale. In hindsight, this is not unusual because we did not include a clinical subsample. The mean of the BDI was only 5·85. The range of scores for moderate–severe depression is 19–29 (Beck and Steer, 1987). It is clear that our sample, on average, is far from this, even when one adds the standard deviation to the mean in this sample. We have a floor effect in these data that will attenuate the correlation.

It is not surprising, then, to find no statistically significant relationship between forgiveness and depression in the full sample (N=394). We, however, do find a relationship when we center only on the middle-aged adult sample who report *a great deal of hurt* from a *family* member (N=34). The Negative Affect subscale of the EFI and the BDI correlate −0·43, p<0·01. The college sample, in contrast, does not show such a relationship when severely hurt by an opposite-gender friend.

Comparing parents and adolescents on forgiveness
This comparison concerned the correlation between children and their parents

on forgiveness. The analysis is only suggestive because we needed to control degree of hurt in each pair. In other words, we would expect no child–parent correlation where one of the pair is judging a mild hurt whereas the other is judging a very deep hurt. Such cases would be like comparing random pairs because they are reporting on widely different experiences. Only 21 pairs were found in which both child and parent experienced very deep hurt; here the Pearson correlation was 0·54, $p < 0·01$. Under the condition of deep hurt and in this limited subsample, parents and children forgive to similar degrees.

Relation of forgiveness to religiosity

There was no general relation between forgiveness and religiosity (7-item scale) for the entire sample ($r = 0·09$), for college students with deep hurt ($r = 0·004$, $N = 57$), or for parents with deep hurt ($r = 0·18$, $N = 60$). This lack of relationship was replicated in Rackley (1993) and Wilson (1994). More specific significant correlations were found between forgiveness and religiosity when the person was hurt by a more distant person other than family member or friend. The correlation between forgiveness and religiosity when offended by an employer and the general category "other" is 0·37, $p < 0·05$, $N = 66$. The positive affect, cognition, and behavior subscales accounted for this ($r = 0·32$, 0·42, and 0·40 respectively, all $p < 0·05$). It is apparent that both those who practice, and those who do not practice, religion take an equally positive stance toward family and friends; the religious, in particular, take a positive stance toward more distant others.

We then divided the entire sample into those who belonged to an organized religion (primarily Christian or Jewish) and those who did not; an analysis of co-variance controlling for age, educational level, time since the hurt, and degree of hurt showed a significant effect favoring those religiosity affiliated ($F_{(1,378)} = 3·98$, $p < 0·05$, adjusted $\bar{x} = 245·64$ for non-affiliated ($N = 116$), and 259·28 for affiliated ($N = 268$)). $N = 384$ rather than 394 because 10 participants' affiliation was vague or uncertain.

DISCUSSION

This initial attempt to devise a psychometrically sound measure of interpersonal forgiveness in late adolescence is encouraging. The internal consistency reliability for the 60-item forgiveness scale is exceptionally high. Even though we expect some attenuation with subsequent samples, those reliabilities should remain high. The scale, despite its socially sensitive content, is not contaminated by a social desirability bias: respondents answer honestly.

Even with the high internal consistency reliabilities, the EFI subscales do

appear to be distinguishable from one another. People seem to be most positive toward those who hurt them first in how they *think about* the offender. How one *feels* about the other appears most negative. This is important information because it is the *Affective* subscale that is most consistently and negatively related to anxiety.

There appears to be no general relationship between the EFI and psychological depression. This also is the case for late adolescents in particular. However, there is a moderate relation when we focus on the middle-aged and their severe problems specifically with family members. This strongly suggests that we must develop models of forgiveness that take into account not only degree of forgiveness given to an offender, but also a person's age, who hurt him or her, and the severity of hurt experienced. The clinical consequences are different depending on these variables.

Further, we need to focus on developmental issues when assessing whether forgiveness is to be used as a coping strategy in the helping professions. Forgiveness seems particularly appropriate for college students who are experiencing severe hurt within the developmentally significant male–female relationship. Those experiencing such difficulties may be feeling heightened anxiety as well. Forgiveness seems appropriate for middle-aged adults who are experiencing severe hurt within developmentally significant family relationships. The developmental analyses here suggest that the college students are generally more deeply affected when so hurt as seen in their lower forgiveness and higher anxiety levels. Yet, in the middle-age sample, those with deep hurts within a family context are prone to both anxiety and psychological depression. The correlations between children and parents on forgiveness is only suggestive because of the small N. Yet, the significant relation does point to possible modeling effects or the operation of particular parenting styles; these issues are worth exploring in future research.

There is no general relationship between forgiveness and depth of religiosity. As one speculation, because forgiveness is now in popular awareness, including many self-help books, the concept is available to all. The religiously-affiliated, excluding depth of religiosity, have a modestly increased forgiveness over the non-affiliated. Helping professionals who try to foster forgiveness might become aware of the person's affiliation or non-affiliation because the religiously-affiliated may, in some cases, have a little more subtle sense of forgiveness. We see a similar issue in the positive correlations between *positive* aspects of forgiveness and religiosity when forgiving more interpersonally distant offenders.

For the future, we hope to develop an international version of the Enright Forgiveness Inventory. In the ideal, we will select the 60 best items across diverse cultures so that direct comparisons can be made among cultures with one scale. Preliminary analyses in Brazil, Korea, and Taiwan strongly suggest

that the 60-item scale described here will be the definitive international measure.

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