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Self-forgiveness for interpersonal and intrapersonal transgressions

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Self-forgiveness for interpersonal and intrapersonal transgressions

by

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ABSTRACT

At the present time, little is known about the factors involved in self-forgiveness. In order to advance theoretical and empirical knowledge in this area, several correlates of self-forgiveness for interpersonal and intrapersonal transgressions were examined. Across two studies, participants wrote about a previous interpersonal or intrapersonal transgression (Study 1, N = 198) or imagined themselves in a particular interpersonal or intrapersonal transgression situation (Study 2; N = 240) and then responded to items related to the transgression. Analyses revealed that emotions focused on the event (i.e., shame, guilt, and rumination) were critical factors in the self-forgiveness process. In addition, other categories of variables (perceived forgiveness/conciliatory behaviors, offense-related, personality/individual difference, and relationship) were linked to self-forgiveness. The implications for future self-forgiveness research are discussed.

CHAPTER 1. OVERVIEW AND REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Jeremy regrets cheating on his girlfriend. Lisa feels guilty for eating an entire pepperoni pizza and ruining her diet. Will is disappointed with himself for playing so many video games instead of going to class. Based on this limited information, who might be the most likely to forgive themselves? Also, what factors determine those who are able to forgive themselves right away, and who needs more time? There are a number of factors that can affect whether or not self-forgiveness occurs, and research is just beginning to identify and understand them. This research aims to extend the current forgiveness literature by identifying important correlates of self-forgiveness for interpersonal and intrapersonal transgressions.

Why Study Self-Forgiveness?

Most people encounter situations in which they consider forgiving themselves for something they have done to themselves or to someone else. As illustrated above, the transgression could be something relatively mundane, such as playing video games and missing class, or it may be something much more serious, such as relationship infidelity. Furthermore, the transgression may be something that has happened recently or an event that happened many years ago. In short, some form of self-forgiveness is a part of life for many people. Due to the consequences and implications of forgiving the self, it is a crucial area of study.

Several studies have established how important self-forgiveness is for one's mental health. Mauger et al. (1992) found a strong positive relationship between a lack of self-forgiveness and depression and anxiety. In addition, Romero, Kalidas, Elledge, Chang, Liscum, and Friedman (2006) found that, among a sample of breast cancer patients, having a self-forgiving attitude was associated with lower levels of mood disturbance and higher quality of life. Despite the implications of forgiving the self, there has been little empirical research focusing on self-forgiveness. Compared to the flourishing interpersonal forgiveness literature, self-forgiveness has received relatively little empirical attention, prompting prominent forgiveness researchers to refer to it as "the step-child of forgiveness research" (Hall & Fincham, 2005).

The (Meager) Self-Forgiveness Literature:
Definitions, Measurement, and Theory

Several issues plague the current self-forgiveness literature. First, there is no single, widely-accepted definition of self-forgiveness. Similar to the interpersonal forgiveness literature, researchers do not share the same definition of self-forgiveness; some researchers frame self-forgiveness in terms of willingness to be kind to the self after abandoning self-resentment (i.e., Enright, 1996); others frame self-forgiveness as motivation to avoid self-retaliation and increase benevolence towards the self (Hall & Fincham, 2005).

In addition, there are no scales that adequately measure self-forgiveness. One established self-forgiveness scale includes items that are not related to self-forgiveness (i.e., Mauger et al., 2002); another does not measure "true" self-forgiveness (Tangney, Boone, Fee, & Reinsmith, 1999). Sufficient measurement of any construct is crucial, so the lack of a good scale may be limiting to self-forgiveness research.

Finally, there is a great lack of theory development in this area. It is possible that the lack of agreement on a suitable definition and the lack of an adequate self-forgiveness measure contribute to this deficit. To our knowledge, one theoretical paper on self-forgiveness exists and was recently published by Hall and Fincham (2005). The issues described above are discussed further in the following sections.

Defining Self-Forgiveness

Several definitions of self-forgiveness exist in the literature. Enright (1996) defined self-forgiveness as "a willingness to abandon self-resentment in the face of one's own acknowledged objective wrong, while fostering compassion, generosity, and love towards oneself" (p. 115). Several years later, DeShea and Wahkinney (2003) described self-forgiveness as "a process of releasing resentment towards oneself for a perceived transgression or wrongdoing" (cited in Tangney, Boone, & Dearing, 2005, p.144). Recently, Hall and Fincham (2005) defined self-forgiveness as "a set of motivational

changes whereby one becomes decreasingly motivated to avoid stimuli associated with the offense, decreasingly motivated to retaliate against the self (e.g., punish the self, engage in self-destructive behaviors etc.), and increasingly motivated to act benevolently towards the self" (p. 4).

In addition, Hall and Fincham (2005) distinguished between what they termed *pseudo self-forgiveness* and *true self-forgiveness.* In pseudo self-forgiveness, individuals let themselves off the hook for a transgression; they perceive the negative consequences as trivial and do not take personal responsibility. In contrast, true self-forgiveness involves admitting to and taking responsibility for the transgression. Tangney et al. (2005) liken pseudo self-forgiveness to a "moral, cognitive, and affective shortcut" (p. 145) – in other words, if an individual does not take responsibility for his or her actions, it is relatively easy to avoid the consequences and negative thoughts and feelings that might accompany accepting one's role in the transgression.

Distinguishing interpersonal and self-forgiveness. It is important to make a distinction between the different types of forgiveness discussed in the current research. *Interpersonal forgiveness* involves one person forgiving another for a transgression; in this case, one person hurts another in some way. *Self-forgiveness* involves forgiving the self for a transgression, and can be divided into self-forgiveness for *interpersonal* or *intrapersonal transgressions*. Self-forgiveness for interpersonal transgressions involves forgiving the self for hurting another person (e.g., cheating on a partner). In contrast, self-forgiveness for intrapersonal transgressions involves forgiving the self for hurting the self (e.g.., cheating on one's diet). This paper focuses on self-forgiveness for interpersonal and intrapersonal transgressions, but occasionally makes reference to the interpersonal forgiveness literature for comparisons.

Measuring Self-Forgiveness

Several self-forgiveness scales have been developed, including a dispositional Forgiveness of Self scale (Mauger et al., 1992), a self-forgiveness subscale of the Multidimensional Forgiveness Inventory (Tangney, Boone, Fee, &

Reinsmith, 1999), and most recently, a Forgiveness of Self subscale of the Heartland Forgiveness Scale (Thompson et al., 2005). Mauger and colleagues (1992) were the first to develop a self-forgiveness scale, but this measure contains several items that do not reflect self-forgiveness (e.g., "I often get into trouble for not being careful to follow the rules" and "I don't think of myself as an evil person"). Furthermore, Tangney et al. (2005) conclude that the Multidimensional Forgiveness Inventory actually measures pseudo self-forgiveness, not true self-forgiveness. With this measure, self-forgiveness has a strong negative association with blaming the self, which suggests that individuals who forgive themselves do not take responsibility for their transgressions. In addition, the Multidimensional Forgiveness Inventory is positively associated with narcissism and self-esteem, leading to the conclusion that, according to this scale, individuals who forgive the self are "self-centered, insensitive, narcissistic individuals who come up short in the moral domain, showing lower levels of shame, guilt, and empathic responsiveness" (Tangney et al., 2005, p. 150). Taken together, the empirical evidence suggests that the Multidimensional Forgiveness Inventory is not a measure of true self-forgiveness.

The scale currently showing the most promise is the Forgiveness of Self subscale of the Heartland Forgiveness Scale (Thompson et al., 2005). Across six studies and 2,522 participants, the Heartland Forgiveness Scale demonstrated good psychometric and discriminative properties. The Forgiveness of Self subscale was positively correlated with the Mauger et al. (1992) measure as well as with the self subscale of the Multidimensional Forgiveness Inventory (Tangney et al., 1999). The subscale also correlated negatively with measures of depression and anxiety (Thompson et al., 2005). In addition, this subscale contains items that have high face validity (i.e., "I don't stop criticizing myself for negative things I've felt, thought, said, or done") and seems to represent the construct without unrelated items. Furthermore, the Forgiveness of Self subscale was significantly correlated with actual behaviors (preference for listening to forgiving or unforgiving statements during a listening task, Study 5; tendency to write about strong positive or strong

negative statements when describing instances of forgiveness, Study 6; Thompson et al., 2005). A great deal of research has focused mainly on self-report measures, so it is unique for a scale to be related to behaviors. Given that the Heartland Forgiveness Scale is a relatively new measure, it remains to be seen if it will emerge as the preferred self-forgiveness scale.

Developing a Theory of Self-Forgiveness: Hall & Fincham (2005)

There has been only modest theoretical and empirical attention given to self-forgiveness, and it is possible that existing self-forgiveness measures are comprised of items representing idiosyncratic notions of self-forgiveness particular to a given researcher. In order to advance the literature, valid and reliable measures are needed to examine the construct, and it is crucial to have solid theory on which to base such measures.

In their review of the sparse self-forgiveness literature, Hall and Fincham (2005) noted that, especially compared to the interpersonal forgiveness literature, little is known about the processes or predictors involved in forgiving the self. Extrapolating from the current interpersonal forgiveness literature and the existing self-forgiveness literature, Hall and Fincham (2005) proposed the first (and thus far, only) theoretical model of self-forgiveness. This model is comprised of *emotional*, *social-cognitive*, *behavioral*, and *offense-related* determinants, and each are discussed below.

Emotional determinants of self-forgiveness consist of empathy, guilt, and shame. Previous research is inconsistent with regards to the relation between empathy and self-forgiveness; Zechmeister and Romero (2002) reported that lower levels of empathy are related to forgiving the self, whereas Barbetta (2002) found no association between empathy and self-forgiveness. In their model, Hall and Fincham (2005) expected empathy to be negatively associated with self-forgiveness.

With regards to the relation between self-forgiveness and guilt, Zechmeister and Romero (2002) found that individuals who reported forgiving the self for a transgression reported feeling less guilt than those who did not forgive the self for a transgression. Hall and Fincham (2005) predicted that low levels of guilt and shame

would be associated with high levels of self-forgiveness, because low levels of guilt and shame allow an individual to become benevolent toward the self instead of becoming destructive (as high levels of guilt and shame might encourage).

Social-cognitive correlates of self-forgiveness included attributions and perceived forgiveness from the victim or a higher power. Previous research has revealed an association between interpersonal forgiveness and attributions such that participants who perceived a transgression as intentional were more likely to blame and less likely to forgive the transgressor (Boon & Sulsky, 1997). Hall and Fincham (2005) hypothesized that external, unstable, and specific attributions would be associated with forgiveness-promoting beliefs and would serve to increase levels of self-forgiveness. In contrast, they hypothesized that internal, stable, and global attributions would be associated with forgiveness-inhibiting beliefs and would serve to decrease levels of self-forgiveness.

Existing research is unclear regarding the association between self-forgiveness and perceived forgiveness from the victim. Witvliet, Lugwig, and Bauer (2002) found that participants experienced "physiological changes consistent with self-forgiveness" (cited in Hall & Fincham, 2005, p. 181) when they thought about a victim responding with mercy to a transgression, whereas Zechmiester and Romero (2002) did not find an association between perceived forgiveness from victim and self-forgiveness. Furthermore, Carafo and Exline (2003) found a positive relationship between self-forgiveness and believing that the self was forgiven by a higher power (i.e., God). In their model, Hall and Fincham (2005) predicted a strong positive association between levels of self-forgiveness and perceived forgiveness from the victim and a higher power.

Behavioral correlates of self-forgiveness included conciliatory behaviors (i.e., seeking forgiveness, offering an apology, or making amends). Zechmeister and Romero (2002) found a positive relation between self-forgiveness and the likelihood of engaging in conciliatory behaviors toward the victim. In their model, Hall and Fincham (2005) predicted that attempts at seeking forgiveness, apologizing, and making amends would be positively associated with levels of self-forgiveness.

Finally, an offense-related correlate of self-forgiveness was perceived severity of the transgression. In interpersonal forgiveness, transgression severity is negatively associated with levels of forgiveness (i.e., Fincham, Jackson, & Beach, 2005). Hall and Fincham (2008) examined severity of the transgression by asking participants how their actions affected themselves, the other person, and their relationship with the other person. In their model, Hall and Fincham (2005) hypothesized that lower levels of self-forgiveness would be positively related to severe transgressions and perceived consequences.

Testing the Hypothesized Model. Hall and Fincham (2008) tested this model in a longitudinal, 8-week study. Using a one-item measure of forgiveness ("To what extent do you forgive yourself for hurting the other person?"), they found that self-forgiveness was a process that unfolded over time – levels of self-forgiveness increased with time in a linear fashion, similar to interpersonal forgiveness. At the initial measurement, self-forgiveness for interpersonal transgressions was: negatively associated with guilt, forgiveness-inhibiting attributions, and perceived transgression severity; positively associated with perceived forgiveness from the victim and a higher power; not associated with shame, empathy, or conciliatory behavior toward the victim or a higher power. Guilt emerged as the strongest predictor in the study, suggesting that guilt is crucial when examining self-forgiveness. Because empathy was not a significant correlate, and because I have no specific predictions regarding empathy in the proposed research, it will not be examined in this research. There are, however, specific predictions regarding shame and conciliatory behaviors; thus, they will be included in the proposed research.

It is important to note that other determinants, such as relationship-level or personality-level predictors, are omitted from this model. Hall and Fincham (2005) argue that because these variables are not particularly central in interpersonal forgiveness, they would also be less central in self-forgiveness. Moreover, intrapersonal transgressions were also omitted from their investigation. This issue will be discussed shortly.

Summary

The current self-forgiveness literature suffers from the same issues that the interpersonal forgiveness literature faced years ago at its inception – a lack of content-valid and reliable measures, extensive and consistent research, and a comprehensive set of predictors. Although several self-forgiveness scales and subscales exist, no one measure has emerged as preferable. As previously discussed, the small pool of research that does exist is somewhat contradictory with regards to correlates and predictors of self-forgiveness. Furthermore, due to the focus on self-forgiveness for *interpersonal* transgressions and an omission of potentially important correlates in the only theoretical model (e.g., Hall & Fincham, 2005, 2008), the current self-forgiveness literature is limited. To advance the self-forgiveness literature, other possible predictors, such as relationship-level and personality-level variables, should be explored. Furthermore, examining self-forgiveness for both interpersonal <u>and</u> intrapersonal transgressions may reveal important differences with regards to correlates and predictors. To this end, several categories of variables (relationship quality, personality and individual differences, and intrapersonal transgressions) are discussed below as possible additional features of self-forgiveness.

Additional Variable Categories

Relationship quality. In the interpersonal forgiveness literature, numerous studies have revealed a consistent positive association between forgiveness and being committed, satisfied, and having a close relationship with a partner (Berry & Worthington, 2001; Fincham, Paleari, & Regalia, 2002; Finkel, Rusbult, Kumashiro, & Hannon, 2002; Karremans, Van Lange, Ouwerkerk, & Kluwer, 2003; McCullough, 2000). Because the associations between forgiveness and relationship quality appear to be robust, they are also important to consider in the decision to forgive the self for interpersonal transgressions. It is likely that the quality of one's relationship with the victim will have consequences for the decision to forgive the self. The more committed, satisfied, and close individuals are to the person they hurt, the more difficult it should be to forgive the self for a transgression in that relationship.

Personality and individual differences. Several studies (i.e., Mauger et al., 1992; Maltby, Macaskill, & Day, 2001; Thompson et al., 2005) found that compared to forgiveness of others, forgiveness of self was negatively associated with depression and anxiety. In addition, Ross, Kendall, Matters, Wrobel, and Rye (2004) examined the associations between self-forgiveness and the Five-Factor model of personality. In this study, self-forgiveness was measured using the Forgiveness of Self subscale of the Heartland Forgiveness Scale (Thompson et al., 2005) and the self subscale of the Mauger Forgiveness Scale (Mauger et al., 1992). They hypothesized that neuroticism – composed of anxiety, hostility, depression, self-consciousness, impulsiveness, and vulnerability facets – would be negatively associated with self-forgiveness. Indeed, this association was negative, with correlations ranging from -.23 to -.66. Moreover, neuroticism accounted for almost 40% of the variance in self-forgiveness.

In a comprehensive review of the forgiveness and personality literature, Mullet, Neto, and Riviere (2005) examined the correlations between various personality variables and forgiveness. Self-forgiveness was measured in several studies with two different scales: the Forgiveness of Self scale (Mauger et al., 1992) and the Walker Forgiveness Scale – Self (Walker & Gorsuch, 2002). Analyses revealed that self-forgiveness was negatively associated with neuroticism (r = -.54; Leach & Lark, 2003), emotional stability (r = -.52; Walker & Gorsuch, 2002), anxiety (r = -.53 and -.41; Maltby, Macaskill, & Day, 2001; r = -.44; Walker & Gorsuch, 2002), and hostility (r = -.62) and depression (r = -.50; Seybold, Hill, Neumann, & Chi, 2001). Taken together, I argue that examining personality variables as correlates of self-forgiveness is crucial. I expect that, compared to interpersonal transgressions, personality variables should have a stronger association with self-forgiveness for intrapersonal transgressions.

Intrapersonal transgressions. As previously mentioned, the current literature has focused on forgiving the self for interpersonal transgressions. It is important to also examine self-forgiveness for intrapersonal transgressions. Most people have, at some point, been disappointed with themselves or done something

to themselves that they regret. In fact, intrapersonal transgressions may be quite common in everyday life. For some individuals, failing to meet personal goals may be just as, if not more, important than being concerned about how their actions affect others. Given that the forgiveness literature has historically focused on interpersonal forgiveness, it is natural for researchers to focus new self-forgiveness research on interpersonal transgressions; it is likely that some of the predictors and correlates are similar. Omitting intrapersonal transgressions, however, leaves us with an incomplete picture of the phenomenon. Thus, this research also includes intrapersonal transgressions as an area of study.

The Current Research: Additions to the Hall & Fincham (2008) Self-Forgiveness Model

The goal of the present research is to examine additional correlates of self-forgiveness for interpersonal and intrapersonal transgressions. Along with the correlates included in the Hall and Fincham (2005, 2008) model of self-forgiveness, I propose to examine other correlates of self-forgiveness as well as distinguish between predictors for interpersonal and intrapersonal transgressions. For ease of presentation, a list of the correlates included by Hall and Fincham (2008) and those in the current research are presented in Table 1.

Proposed Additional Correlates

Rumination. The more people ruminate about an offense, the more difficulty they have forgiving the transgressor (Berry et al., 2005; Fincham, Beach, & Davila, 2004; McCullough, 2000). Furthermore, there is a negative correlation between state rumination (e.g., rumination about a specific event) and forgiveness (Wade, Vogel, Liao, & Goldman, 2008). I expect this negative association to also emerge in self-forgiveness, particularly for interpersonal transgressions.

Time since offense. In the interpersonal forgiveness literature, time since the offense is positively associated with interpersonal forgiveness (McCullough, Fincham, & Tsang, 2003; Wohl & McGrath, 2007; Worthington, Kurusu, Collins, Berry, Ripley, & Baier, 2000). I expect this association to be applicable to self-forgiveness as well. Given that forgiving the self for an intrapersonal transgression

only involves one person – one's self – I expect that self-forgiveness will occur more quickly for intrapersonal transgressions than for interpersonal transgressions. After hurting another person, the decision to forgive the self may be affected by how long it takes the victim to forgive, possibly extending the timeline of self-forgiveness.

Action vs. inaction. Individuals make decisions with varying consequences every day. Some of these decisions are good and lead to positive outcomes; some decisions are bad and lead to negative outcomes, which can lead to feelings of remorse or regret (Gilovich, Medvec, & Kahneman, 1998). Research has examined levels of regret for *actions* (things a person has done but wishes they had not done) and *inactions* (things a person has not done but wishes they had). Over time, people tend to regret things they failed to do (e.g., inaction) more than things they did do (e.g., action; Gilovich & Medvec, 1994, 1995). Feelings of remorse and regret tend to produce anger and other negative emotions (Gilovich, Medvec, & Kahneman, 1998), and these negative emotions may become a barrier to self-forgiveness. I hypothesize that individuals who describe an event as something they failed to do will report lower levels of self-forgiveness than those who describe an event as something they did do.

Depression and anxiety. Toussaint and Webb (2005) argue that examining the association between forgiveness and aspects of mental health is very important, remarking that unforgiveness is related to increases in guilt, shame, and regret, all of which contribute to poor mental health. Indeed, numerous studies have examined the associations between forgiveness and mental health (i.e., Berry & Worthington, 2001; Brown, 2003; Maltby, Macaskill, & Day, 2001; Mauger, et al., 1992; Seybold, Hill, Neumann, & Chi, 2001; Toussaint et al., 2001; Witvliet, Phipps, Feldman, & Beckham, 2004). Several studies have examined the relation between forgiveness of the self and mental health, and the conclusions are consistent: individuals who have difficulty forgiving the self are more likely to experience depression and anxiety (both state and trait) than those who have no difficulty (Brown, 2003; Maltby et al., 2001; Mauger et al., 1992; Seybold et al., 2001; Touissaint et al., 2001). Therefore,

it is crucial to examine depression and anxiety in studies of self-forgiveness. I expect these variables to be particularly central for intrapersonal transgressions.

Self-compassion. Self-compassion is comprised of three components: *self-kindness* (being kind to the self, not harsh or judgmental), *common humanity* (seeing the self as part of a larger experience, not separate and cut off from the world), and *mindfulness* (acknowledging one's pain, but not dwelling on it; Neff, 2003). Previous research has established a positive association between the Forgiveness of Self subscale of the Heartland Forgiveness Scale (Thompson et al., 2005) and self-compassion ($r = .59$; Neff, 2008). Although self-compassion and self-forgiveness are related constructs, it is likely that they are distinct. Neff (2008) demonstrated that self-compassion was a stronger predictor of mental health than self-forgiveness, which suggests that self-compassion is not instance-specific like self-forgiveness; self-compassion exists within an individual even when there is nothing to trigger it. I expect self-compassion to be positively associated with self-forgiveness. Because self-compassion is closely linked to thoughts about the self, I expect that this association will be particularly strong for intrapersonal offenses.

Need to belong. Individuals high in the need to belong strive for affiliation and social acceptance, and feel compelled to develop and maintain interpersonal relationships (Baumeister & Leary, 1995). Individuals high in the need to belong, compared to those low in the need to belong, may be hesitant to hurt others for fear of feeling or being rejected. Thus, it is possible that committing an interpersonal transgression would be especially damaging for these individuals, making it particularly hard to forgive the self for such a transgression. Therefore, I expect a negative association between self-forgiveness and the need to belong in interpersonal transgressions.

Neuroticism. Neurotic individuals tend to experience unpleasant emotions more easily than individuals who are not neurotic (John, 1990). For example, neuroticism is linked to anxiety, hostility, depression, self-consciousness, and vulnerability. In addition, neurotic individuals tend to have frequent negative moods and are likely to perceive minor frustrations as difficult and hopeless. Following

previous research (e.g., Ross et al., 2004), I expect neuroticism to be negatively associated with self-forgiveness, particularly for intrapersonal transgressions.

Trait forgiveness. Trait forgiveness is an individual's general disposition to forgive. I expect this inclination to carry over to self-forgiveness, such that individuals high in trait forgiveness should also be more likely to forgive the self than individuals low in trait forgiveness.

Relational self-construal. Individuals with an independent self-construal define the self in terms of important attributes or qualities, whereas individuals with a relational-interdependent self-construal define the self in terms of relationships with others (Cross, Bacon, & Morris, 2000). Due to the focus on the other and the relationship, I expect highly relational individuals will be less likely to forgive the self for interpersonal transgressions than those with low relational self-construals. Committing a transgression involving another person should make it particularly hard for high relationals to forgive the self because relationships are important defining aspects of the self. The possibility of losing a close relationship should be damaging for these individuals.

Narcissism. Individuals who are high in narcissism have an inflated sense of self and personal entitlement (Campbell, Rudich, & Sedikides, 2002; Emmons, 1987; Morf & Rhodewalt, 2001) and perceive themselves to be special and unique (Emmons, 1984; Raskin & Terry, 1988). In addition, previous research has revealed that narcissists tend to take offense easily (McCullough, Emmons, Kilpatrick, & Mooney, 2003), which suggests that narcissists may be faced with the decision to forgive another person fairly often.

In a study examining the association between narcissism and interpersonal forgiveness, Exline, Baumeister, Bushman, Campbell, and Finkel (2004) hypothesized that highly narcissistic individuals would be less willing to forgive, highly sensitive to the costs of forgiving (e.g., keeping track of what is "owed" to them), and more likely to put conditions on forgiving than individuals who were not highly narcissistic. As expected, results indicated that narcissistic individuals were not likely to forgive until they received "repayment" (concessions or retribution), were

quite aware of the costs of forgiveness, and reported skepticism about forgiveness (Exline et al., 2004). In addition, narcissists reported a greater number of interpersonal transgressions in their everyday lives (McCullough, Emmons, Kilpatrick, & Mooney, 2003). Given the relationships between narcissism and interpersonal forgiveness, I expect narcissism to also play a role in self-forgiveness. Individuals high in narcissism should forgive the self relatively easily due to their inflated self-views (i.e., perceptions of being "special"). Indeed, Tangney et al. (2005) found a positive relationship between narcissism and the self subscale of the Multidimensional Forgiveness Inventory. Although it is likely that this scale measures pseudo self-forgiveness (Tangney et al., 2005), the association warrants further investigation.

Self-esteem. Previous investigations of the link between forgiveness and self-esteem have produced inconsistent results. Neto and Mullet (2004) found a significant negative association between forgiveness and self-esteem for females, but a non-significant positive association for males. In addition, Brown and Phillips (2005) found a non-significant positive relationship between forgiveness and self-esteem. Finally, Eaton, Struthers, and Santelli (2006) found a significant positive association between dispositional forgiveness and self-esteem. I hypothesize that, similar to individuals high in narcissism, individuals with high self-esteem will be more likely to forgive the self for a transgression than individuals with low self-esteem. This association should be particularly strong for intrapersonal transgressions.

Commitment, closeness, and relationship satisfaction. Interpersonal forgiveness research has consistently found that forgiveness is likely to occur in relationships that are committed, close, and satisfying (Agnew, Van Lange, Rusbult, & Langston, 1998; Karremans & Van Lange, 2005; McCullough et al., 1998). I expect this association to be different for self-forgiveness. In particular, hurting someone important (e.g., someone to whom one is committed, close, and satisfied with) should make it *more* difficult for individuals to forgive the self for an interpersonal transgression.

State affect. Mood will also be measured in this study. Writing about forgiving the self for an interpersonal transgression may cause different feelings than those experienced from writing about an intrapersonal transgression. In particular, it is possible that writing about hurting someone else, relative to writing about hurting the self, could cause greater negative affect. Therefore, a measure of state affect will be included to use as a covariate and to examine possible mood differences between transgression types.

Hypotheses

Self-Forgiveness for Intrapersonal and Interpersonal Transgressions

Emotion correlates. I hypothesize that rumination will be negatively associated with self-forgiveness in both interpersonal and intrapersonal transgressions. Because shame tends to be a relatively public emotion and guilt tends to be a relatively private emotion (Tangney, Miller, Flicker, & Barlow, 1996), I expect them to function differently in interpersonal and intrapersonal transgressions. In particular, I expect that shame will have a stronger negative association with self-forgiveness in interpersonal transgressions, and guilt will have a stronger negative association with self-forgiveness in intrapersonal transgressions.

Perceived forgiveness/conciliatory behavior correlates. I expect a positive association between perceived forgiveness from a higher power and self-forgiveness for intrapersonal transgressions. I also expect a positive association between perceived forgiveness from other and self-forgiveness for interpersonal transgressions. In addition, I hypothesize a positive association between self-forgiveness and conciliatory behaviors toward a higher power for both intrapersonal and interpersonal transgressions. I expect a positive association between self-forgiveness and conciliatory behaviors toward the victim for interpersonal transgressions.

Offense-specific correlates. I expect a negative association between self-forgiveness and perceived transgression severity for both intrapersonal and interpersonal transgressions. Moreover, I hypothesize a positive association between self-forgiveness and time since the offense, as well as lower levels of self-

forgiveness for transgressions described as inaction (something participants did not do but wish they had) rather than action (something participants did do but wish they had not).

Personality/individual difference correlates*.* I hypothesize negative associations between self-forgiveness and depression, anxiety, relational self-construal, need to belong, and neuroticism in interpersonal and intrapersonal transgressions. Furthermore, I expect positive associations between self-forgiveness and self-compassion, trait forgiveness, narcissism, and self-esteem for both intrapersonal and interpersonal transgressions. Because intrapersonal forgiveness is more focused on the self (e.g., the self's actions, consequences for the self) I hypothesize that the associations between self-forgiveness and personality should be stronger in intrapersonal transgressions.

Relationship correlates*.* I expect negative associations between self-forgiveness and commitment, closeness, and relationship satisfaction for interpersonal transgressions.

Attributions. I expect a positive association between forgiveness-promoting attributions (e.g., external, unstable, and specific attributions) and self-forgiveness for both interpersonal and intrapersonal transgressions.

CHAPTER 2. STUDY 1 METHODS AND PROCEDURES
Overview: Studies 1 and 2

Correlates of self-forgiveness were examined in two studies. In both studies, personality/individual difference correlates (i.e., depression, self-compassion, etc.) were measured first. In Study 1, participants were then asked to generate interpersonal and intrapersonal transgressions from their own lives. In Study 2, participants were then asked to imagine themselves in a specific interpersonal or intrapersonal transgression. A scenario-based study allowed us to control for important variables (i.e., severity of the offense). In both studies, self-forgiveness was then measured along with the other offense-specific correlates (i.e., shame, guilt, etc.).

Study 1

Method

Participants and procedures. Participants were 269 undergraduates enrolled in introductory psychology courses at Iowa State University. Seventy-one participants were excluded from analyses for the following reasons: they wrote about the wrong type of transgression ($N = 17$); they did not list or describe any transgressions ($N = 22$); they were not born in the U.S. and did not speak English as a first language ($N = 10$); they indicated that their data should not be used ($N = 12$); or they were an outlier (+2 SD) on the time since the offense measure ($N = 10$; these individuals reported the event occurring 75 or more weeks ago). The final sample was comprised of 208 participants ($N = 94$ interpersonal condition, $N = 104$ intrapersonal condition). The mean participant age was 19.23 (SD = 1.71). The sample was 65.7% female and 81.8% Caucasian.

All measures were completed individually using MediaLab computer-based experimental software. When they arrived at the laboratory, participants were asked to complete various personality and individual difference measures for the first part of the study, and then were instructed to recall and list situations within the past 12 months that involved forgiving the self for interpersonal transgressions and intrapersonal transgressions. After generating a list of these situations, participants

were asked to choose one situation (interpersonal or intrapersonal, determined by random assignment) to write about at length. After the writing task, participants were asked to complete the second part of the study, which included a number of measures designed to examine the correlates of self-forgiveness. After completing these measures, participants completed demographic questions and were thanked and debriefed by a trained experimenter.

Measures: Interpersonal and Intrapersonal Transgressions

Before analyses were conducted, all measures were submitted to a principal components analysis to make sure they were classified in the appropriate set (e.g., to ensure that shame, guilt, and rumination do load together to form one set of correlates)[1]. All measures were submitted to a principal components analysis with promax rotation. This solution yielded six components that explained 71.23% of the variance. Communalities ranged from .473 to .897. Examination of the pattern matrix revealed that most measures loaded as hypothesized with the exception of the relational self-construal measure and the narcissism measure. In fact, they loaded separately on their own component. Because these scales are individual difference measures, and because they were both correlated with other personality/individual difference measures in the study, they were added to the personality/individual differences set of correlates. In addition, the conciliatory behaviors toward a higher power/other person and perceived forgiveness from a higher power/other person loaded together whereas they comprised two different sets in the Hall and Fincham (2008) model. The results of the new correlate classifications are listed in Table 3 and will be used to frame subsequent analyses and discussion.

Personality/Individual Difference Correlates

Depression. Depression was measured with the Center for Epidemiologic Studies Depression Scale (CES-D; Radloff, 1977). Participants were asked to indicate how often they felt or behaved in certain ways over the past week. Items include, "I felt that everything I did was an effort" and "I felt lonely" and were

answered on a 5-point Likert-type scale ranging from 0 (*rarely or none of the time*) to 4 (*all of the time*; α = .86). Higher scores reflect higher levels of depression.

Self-compassion. Participants' level of self-compassion was assessed with the Self-Compassion Scale (Neff, 2003). This scale contains 26 items that were rated on a 5-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 (*almost never*) to 5 (*almost always*; α = .89). Higher scores reflect higher levels of self-compassion.

Anxiety. The State-Trait Anxiety Inventory (Spielberger, Gorsuch, & Lushene, 1970) was used to measure anxiety. Participants rated the extent to which each statement describes them on a 5-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 5 (*strongly agree*). Items include, "I worry too much over something that really doesn't matter" and "I get in a state of tension or turmoil as I think over my recent concerns and interests" ($α_{trait}$ = .79; $α_{state}$ = .85). Higher scores reflect higher levels trait or state anxiety.

Need to belong. Participants rated the extent to which they seek acceptance from and connectedness with others by completing the revised Need to Belong scale (Leary, Kelly, Cottrell, & Schreindorfer, 2007). This scale consists of 10 items such as, "I try hard not to do things that will make other people avoid or reject me" and "It bothers me a great deal when I am not included in other people's plans." Items were rated on a 5-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 5 (*strongly agree*; α = .80). Higher scores reflect higher levels of the need to belong.

Neuroticism. Neuroticism was measured with the Big Five Inventory (BFI; John, 1990). The BFI is a 44-item scale designed to measure dimensions of the Five Factor Model (extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, neuroticism, and openness to experience). This research used the eight items designed to measure Neuroticism. Participants were presented with these items and were asked to rate the extent to which each characteristic described themselves. Items from the Neuroticism subscale include "can be tense" and "worries a lot." Each item was rated on a 5-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 5 (*strongly disagree*; α = .80). Higher scores reflect higher levels of neuroticism.

Trait forgiveness. Trait forgiveness was measured with the Trait Forgiveness Scale (Berry et al., 2005). This scale is comprised of 10 items measuring an individual's general disposition for forgiveness. Items include, "I can usually forgive and forget an insult" and "I am a forgiving person," and were answered on a 7-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 7 (*strongly agree*; α = .80). Higher scores reflect higher levels of trait forgiveness.

Relational self-construal. Relational self-construal was assessed with the Relational-Interdependent Self-Construal Scale (RISC; Cross et al., 2000). This 11-item scale measures the extent to which participants define the self in terms of relationships with others. Items such as, "When I think of myself, I often think of my close friends and family also" and "My close relationships are an important reflection of who I am" were rated on a 7-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 (strongly *disagree*) to 7 (*strongly agree*; α = .87). Higher scores reflect higher levels of relational self-construal.

Narcissism. Participant's level of narcissism was measured with the short form of the Narcissistic Personality Inventory (Ames, Rose, & Anderson, 2006). This scale is comprised of 16 pairs of items reflecting either high or low levels of narcissism. Participants were asked to choose a statement from each pair that best described them (α = .71). Higher scores reflect higher levels of narcissism.

Global self-esteem. Self-esteem was assessed with the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (Rosenberg, 1965). This 10-item measure asks participants to rate the extent they agree or disagree with statements on a 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 5 (s*trongly agree*) Likert-type scale. Sample statements include, "On the whole, I am satisfied with myself" and "At times, I think I am no good at all" (reverse scored; α = .89). Higher scores reflect higher levels of self-esteem.

List Generation Task and Writing Task

After completing the individual difference measures, participants were asked to think about situations, in the past year, in which they forgave themselves for something they did. Specifically, participants were instructed to: "Think of specific times when YOU harmed, disappointed, or hurt YOURSELF, AND times when YOU

harmed, disappointed, or hurt SOMEONE ELSE. That is, think of times when YOU did, said, or thought something that violated your beliefs about how you should think or behave" (Thompson et al., 2005). Thus, participants were asked to recall both interpersonal and intrapersonal transgressions. To facilitate their recall, participants were given examples of interpersonal and intrapersonal transgressions. Once they completed the list generation task, participants were then asked to choose one situation to describe in detail, including what happened, who was involved, how they felt, etc. Participants were randomly assigned to write about an interpersonal or an intrapersonal transgression, and were given up to 10 minutes to complete this task. Once they were done with the writing task, participants were asked to complete the second portion of the study, which had questions pertaining to the event they wrote about.

Self-Forgiveness Items

Each self-forgiveness item was modified to reflect participant's thoughts about the situation they described by referring to "the situation" and was measured with the following items: "To what extent have you forgiven yourself for the situation you just described?" (Hall & Fincham, 2008). This item was rated on a 5-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 (*not forgiven self at all*) to 5 (*forgiven self completely*). Other self-forgiveness items included: "I hold grudges against myself for negative things I did in the situation" (reverse scored), "It is really hard for me to accept myself because I messed up in this situation" (reverse scored), and "I can't stop criticizing myself for negative things I felt, thought, said, or did in the situation" (reverse scored), "With time, I have become understanding of myself for mistakes I made in the situation" (Heartland Forgiveness Scale; Thompson, Snyder, Hoffman et al., 2005); "A lot of times I have feelings of guilt or regret for the things I did in the situation" (reverse scored), "I find it hard to forgive myself for some things that I did in the situation" (reverse scored), and "I am often angry at myself for the stupid things I did in the situation" (reverse scored; Forgiveness of Self scale; Mauger et al., 1992). Items were rated on a 5-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 5 (*strongly agree*).

The eight self-forgiveness items were submitted to a principal components analysis. Forcing a one-component solution, these items explained 56.29% of the total variance. Communalities were generally acceptable (ranging from .53 to .69, with the exception of .15 for one item). Based on item communality and factor loadings, two items were eliminated from analysis. The remaining six items were submitted to a principal components analysis. Forcing a one-factor solution, these items explained 65.43% of the variance. All communalities were good (ranging from .53 to .76) and factor loadings were high (.73 to .87). Thus, six of the eight self-forgiveness items were retained to comprise the self-forgiveness measure (α = .88). See Appendix A for the included and excluded self-forgiveness items.

State Affect

Mood was measured using the Positive and Negative Affect Scale (PANAS; Watson, Clark, & Tellegen, 1988). Participants rated the extent to which each item described how they were feeling at that particular moment on a 5-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 (*very slightly*) to 5 (*extremely*). Items are comprised of 10 positive (i.e., inspired, determined, enthusiastic; α = .91) and 10 negative (i.e., irritable, ashamed, jittery; α = .90) affect terms. Higher scores reflect higher levels of positive or negative affect.

Emotion Correlates

Shame and guilt. Feelings of shame and guilt about the transgression were measured with the State Shame and Guilt Scale (Marschall, Sanftner, & Tangney, 1994). This measure consists of 15 items and has three subscales, two of which were used in this study. The Shame subscale consists of 5 items that measure current feelings of shame (e.g., "I want to sink into the floor and disappear"; α = .87). The Guilt subscale consists of 5 items that measure current feelings of guilt (e.g., "I feel remorse, regret"; α = .83). Items were rated on a 5-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 (*not feeling this way at all*) to 5 (*feeling this way very strongly*). Higher scores reflect higher levels of shame and guilt.

Rumination. Rumination was measured with the Interpersonal Offense Scale (Wade, Vogel, Liao, & Goldman, 2008). This 6-item scale is designed to

measure rumination about an interpersonal offense. Items were adapted to refer to the detailed transgression participants wrote about. Items such as, "I find myself replaying the situation over and over in my mind" and "Memories about my wrongful actions in this situation have limited my enjoyment of life" were answered on a 5-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 5 (*strongly agree;* α = .91). Higher scores reflect higher levels of rumination.

Perceived Forgiveness and Conciliatory Behavior Correlates

Perceived forgiveness from a higher power. Perceived forgiveness from a higher power was measured with one item: "To what extent do you believe you have been forgiven by a higher power for the offense? and (Hall & Fincham, 2008). Participants responded on a 5-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 (*not at all*) to 5 (*completely*) scale. Higher scores reflect higher levels of forgiveness.

Perceived forgiveness from the other person (interpersonal only). One item was used to assess the extent to which participants felt they had been forgiven for the offense: "To what extent do you believe you have been forgiven by the other person for the offense?" (Hall & Fincham, 2008). Participants responded on a 5-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 (*not at all*) to 5 (*completely*). Higher scores reflect higher levels of perceived forgiveness from the other.

Conciliatory behavior toward a higher power. Participants rated the extent to which they made conciliatory attempts toward a higher power by responding to two statements: "I apologized to a higher power (i.e., God) for my behavior" and "I asked a higher power to forgive me" (Hall & Fincham, 2008). Items were answered on a 5-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 (*not at all*) to 5 (*extensively*). Higher scores reflect higher levels of conciliatory behavior.

Conciliatory behavior toward the victim (interpersonal only). Participants rated the extent to which they made conciliatory attempts toward the victim by responding to each of the following: "I apologized to the other person for my behavior", "I asked the other person to forgive me", and "I did something to make amends for my behavior" (Hall & Fincham, 2008). Items were answered on a 5-point

Likert-type scale ranging from 1 (*not at all*) to 5 (*extensively*; α = .78). Higher scores reflect higher levels of conciliatory behavior toward the victim.

Offense-Specific Correlates

      Perceived severity of offense*.* Participants rated the severity of the transgression on a 7-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 (*not at all severe*) to 7 (*extremely severe*).

      Time since offense. Participants indicated how long ago the offense occurred (in weeks).

      Action vs. inaction. Participants were asked whether the transgression they described was related to their actions or their inactions. Specifically, participants were asked to choose whether the transgression involved "Something you *did* do" or "Something you *failed* to do."

Relationship Correlates

      Commitment (interpersonal only)*.* An 8-item measure assessing intent to persist, long-term orientation, and psychological attachment was used to measure commitment (Rusbult, Martz, & Agnew, 1998). Items include statements such as, "I would really feel upset if our relationship were to end in the near future" were rated on a 5-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 (*not at all*) to 5 (*very much*; α = .95). Higher scores reflect higher levels of commitment.

      Closeness (interpersonal only)*.* Closeness was measured using the Inclusion of the Other in the Self Scale (Aron, Aron, & Smollan, 1992). This task consists of a series of seven overlapping circles that become progressively more overlapping from left to right. Participants were told that one circle represents the self, and the other represents the partner. They were instructed to choose the set of overlapping circles they feel best represents their closeness to their partner. The task was modified such that "partner" will be replaced with "the person you hurt." Higher ratings reflect greater degrees of perceived closeness.

      Relationship satisfaction (interpersonal only)*.* The Relationship Assessment Scale (Hendrick, 1988) was used to measure relationship satisfaction. This seven-item scale consists of questions such as, "In general, how satisfied are

you with your relationship?" and "How good is your relationship compared to most?" Participants responded on a 5-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 (*not at all satisfied/good*) to 5 (*completely satisfied/very good*; α = .89). Anchors were adjusted to fit with each item.

Attributions

Participants completed the Revised Causal Dimension Scale (McAuley, Duncan, & Russell, 1992), a twelve-item scale designed to examine attributions for one's behavior. Participants were asked to consider the situation they described and to think about the causes of their actions. Due to a computer error, this measures was presented as a forced choice scale instead of a Likert-type scale. Participants were presented with pairs of statements and were instructed to choose the item that best reflected their response. Pairs of statements included, "reflects an aspect of yourself" and "reflects an aspect of the situation" as well as "something about you" and "something about others." Statements reflected aspects of locus of causality (α = .51), external control (α = .68), stability (α = .38), and personal control (α = .63). Responses from each subscale were summed.

Additional Measure

Use of data. Participants were also asked to indicate whether or not their data should be used in analyses. Specifically, participants were told, "Are there any reasons that we should not use your data? For example, if you did not take your tasks seriously, or if you answered questions randomly and did not pay attention to the tasks, we should not use your data." Participants were instructed to choose one of the following statements: "Yes, my data should be used," or "No, my data should not be used."

CHAPTER 3. STUDY 1 RESULTS

Results

Transgression Lists and Detailed Transgression Descriptions

Transgression lists. Trained independent coders examined the lists of transgressions generated by participants. Coders classified each transgression as interpersonal or intrapersonal. Examples of interpersonal transgressions included, "I told one of my friend's secrets to my boyfriend and betrayed her trust", "I made out with my best friend's girlfriend", and "I told a lie that broke up a relationship between two of my good friends." Examples of intrapersonal transgressions included, "I hurt myself by not sticking to my weekly eating habits", "I hurt myself by not studying more", and "I procrastinate, which causes me to have more stress and get less sleep."

An interrater reliability analysis using the Kappa statistic was performed to determine consensus among raters. The interrater reliability was found to be good ($\kappa = .92$). Discrepancies in classifications were resolved by the author. Participants generated a total of 872 transgressions (458 interpersonal and 414 intrapersonal). On average, participants generated 2.20 (SD = 2.09) interpersonal, 1.99 (SD = 1.67) intrapersonal, and 4.19 (SD = 3.29) total transgressions.

Detailed transgression descriptions. Coders also examined the detailed descriptions of transgressions generated by participants. Participants were randomly assigned to provide a detailed description of either an interpersonal transgression or an intrapersonal transgression. Coders independently classified each description as describing an interpersonal or an intrapersonal transgression. Examples of interpersonal transgressions included telling one's father that the participant hated him, cheating on one's partner, and lying to one's mother about being pregnant. Examples of intrapersonal transgressions included drinking with friends while taking prescription drugs, losing a scholarship for being lazy and subsequently failing a class, and cutting one's self due to the perceived lack of social support. Participants who did not write about the correct type of transgression were eliminated from analyses ($N = 17$).

The Kappa statistic was also used to determine consensus among coders for classification of the detailed transgressions. The inter-rater reliability was found to be good (κ = .93). Discrepancies in transgression classifications were resolved by the author.

Descriptive Statistics and Bivariate Correlations

Descriptive statistics for each measure are presented in Table 4. Bivariate correlations were completed separately for interpersonal and intrapersonal transgressions (see Tables 5 and 6). Independent sample t-tests were used to examine differences in mean levels of the personality/individual difference measures between interpersonal and intrapersonal transgression conditions. No significant differences were found (all ts < 1.50, all ps $\geq$ .14). Thus, it appears random assignment was successful.

The Pearson correlations underwent r-to-z transformations. There was a significant difference in correlation magnitude between self-forgiveness and perceived forgiveness from a higher power (Z_{diff} = -2.25, p < .05), the need to belong (Z_{diff} = 2.10, p < .05), and relational self-construal (Z_{diff} = 1.74, p < .05). In each case, the association between self-forgiveness and the correlate was stronger for intrapersonal transgressions than for interpersonal transgressions.

Correlations in interpersonal transgressions. As hypothesized, there was a strong negative correlation between self-forgiveness and shame, guilt, and rumination. These strong correlations suggest that emotions are central in self-forgiveness. Indeed, Hall and Fincham (2008) found that guilt was the strongest predictor of self-forgiveness in their model.

As expected, there was a positive association between self-forgiveness and perceived forgiveness from a higher power and the other person. Contrary to predictions, however, self-forgiveness was not associated with conciliatory behavior toward the other person, and was negatively associated with conciliatory behaviors toward a higher power. This suggests that the harder an individual attempts to make up for their actions, the more difficult it is to forgive the self for hurting another.

Self-forgiveness was negatively correlated with perceived severity, which is the same association that is found in the interpersonal forgiveness literature. In contrast to what is found in the interpersonal forgiveness literature, self-forgiveness was not associated with time since the transgression. This suggests that, in interpersonal transgressions, time is not an important factor in self-forgiveness.

Similar to the Forgiveness of Self subscale of the Heartland Forgiveness Scale (Thompson et al., 2005) and in line with predictions, self-forgiveness was negatively correlated with depression, neuroticism, and both state and trait anxiety. Furthermore, self-forgiveness was positively correlated with self-compassion, trait forgiveness, and self-esteem. There was a negative correlation with narcissism but a positive correlation with self-esteem, which suggests that the self-forgiveness measure used in this study may not be measuring pseudo self-forgiveness like the Multidimensional Forgiveness Inventory (Tangney et al., 2005). Finally, there were no significant correlations between self-forgiveness and the need to belong or relational self-construal.

Surprisingly, there were only marginally significant correlations between self-forgiveness and closeness and commitment, and no significant correlation with relationship satisfaction. Taken together, this suggests that, in self-forgiveness, relationship correlates may not function the way they do for interpersonal forgiveness (where commitment, closeness, and relationship satisfaction are considered to be robust predictors of forgiveness).

Correlations in intrapersonal transgressions. Contrary to predictions, correlations between the various measures and self-forgiveness were similar for intrapersonal and interpersonal transgressions. Thus, there was no difference in the magnitude of the correlations for interpersonal or intrapersonal transgressions.

Similar to interpersonal transgressions, there was a strong negative association between self-forgiveness and shame, guilt, and rumination. In addition, self-forgiveness was also negatively correlated with depression and both state and trait anxiety. There was also a strong positive association between self-forgiveness and perceived forgiveness from a higher power. Unlike interpersonal

transgressions, self-forgiveness was negatively associated with conciliatory behaviors toward a higher power for intrapersonal transgressions.

In addition, self-forgiveness was strongly negatively correlated with perceived severity in interpersonal transgressions. Furthermore, self-forgiveness in intrapersonal transgressions was also positively correlated with self-compassion and trait forgiveness and negatively correlated with the need to belong and neuroticism. There was no significant correlation with narcissism for self-forgiveness in intrapersonal transgressions.

Correlations with numbers of transgressions generated. Bivariate correlations between the personality/individual differences measures and the number of transgressions participants generated were also examined. There was a negative correlation between the total number of transgressions generated and self-compassion and trait forgiveness, and a positive correlation between number of total transgressions generated and anxiety and depression. Thus, it appears that some aspects of an individual's personality may affect how many transgressions they are able or willing to recall. Highly anxious individuals, as well as those who score relatively high on depression, tended to recall more transgression situations than did others.

Correlations with attributions. There was a significant negative correlation between self-forgiveness and stability in intrapersonal transgressions, meaning that as levels of self-forgiveness increased, the cause of the transgression was perceived to be less permanent, less stable over time, and changeable. Perceptions of stability favor one's self in intrapersonal transgressions; individuals perceive they can change the cause of the event and that it is only temporary. This suggests that there may be a self-serving bias for stability in intrapersonal transgressions.

There was also a significant positive correlation between self-forgiveness and internal control in intrapersonal transgressions, meaning that as levels of self-forgiveness increased, participants perceived that the transgression was something they could manage, regulate, and have power over. This suggests that when individuals do something to harm themselves, they perceive that they are able to

change the cause of their behavior. This correlation was not significant in interpersonal transgressions.

Additional Analysis

Action vs. inaction item. One hundred and twenty-two participants reported that the transgression they described was due to action (something they did) whereas seventy-six participants reported that the transgression was due to inaction (something they failed to do). In addition, there were differences on this item between the interpersonal and intrapersonal transgression conditions. Participants describing an intrapersonal event were just as likely to report that the transgression was due to action ($N = 53$) and inaction ($N = 51$). In contrast, participants describing an interpersonal transgression were significantly more likely to report that the transgression was due to action ($N = 69$) rather than inaction ($N = 25$). This difference was significant, $X^2_{(1)} = 10.52$, $p < .01$. The interaction between transgression type and the action vs. inaction item predicting self-forgiveness was tested and was not significant, $p > .16$.

Contrary to predictions, there was no significant difference in levels of self-forgiveness for transgressions participants classified as something they did (action) vs. something they failed to do (inaction), $t(196) = .81$, $p > .05$. In other words, levels of self-forgiveness were no different when the transgressions participants described involved doing something vs. failing to do something.

Regressions

Both multiple (single set) and hierarchical multiple (total set) regressions were used to examine predictors of self-forgiveness. Separate single set regressions were used to examine how well each set of predictors predicted self-forgiveness. Total set regressions were used to examine how well each set of predictors, controlling for all other predictors, predicted self-forgiveness. This provides information on which sets of correlates explain the most variance, above and beyond all other predictors.

Single set regressions. Multiple regressions were used to examine if, separately, each set of correlates was a significant predictor of self-forgiveness.

Before analysis, correlations between measures were examined. In order to reduce the effects of collinearity, highly correlated measures in the same correlate set were combined to form a composite. In the emotion set, shame, guilt, and rumination were combined to form an emotion composite ($\alpha = .94$). In the personality/individual differences set, depression, state anxiety, and trait anxiety were combined to form a depression/anxiety composite ($\alpha = .93$). In the relationship set, commitment, closeness, and relationship satisfaction were combined to form a relationship quality composite ($\alpha = .95$).

Regression analyses for each set of correlates were conducted separately: one using the combined transgressions (e.g., both interpersonal and intrapersonal transgressions), one using interpersonal transgressions, and one using intrapersonal transgressions. It was important to analyze interpersonal and intrapersonal transgressions together in order to see whether analyzing them separately produced different effects. The dependent variable was self-forgiveness, and the independent variables were the sets of correlates entered separately.

As seen in Table 7, all sets of correlates were significant predictors of self-forgiveness for the combined transgressions[2]. For the combined transgressions, the emotion set of correlates explained the most variance in self-forgiveness, $R^2 = .61$, $F(1, 196) = 301.61$, $p < .001$. The perceived forgiveness and conciliatory behavior set of correlates also explained a significant amount of variance in self-forgiveness, $R^2 = .16$, $F(2, 195) = 18.86$, $p < .001$. Perceived forgiveness from and conciliatory behavior toward a higher power were significant predictors.

In addition, the offense-related set of correlates explained a significant amount of variance in self-forgiveness for the combined transgressions, $R^2 = .25$, $F(3, 193) = 21.17$, $p < .001$. Perceived severity of the offense was the only significant predictor in this set. Finally, the personality set of predictors explained a significant amount of variance in self-forgiveness, $R^2 = .18$, $F(8, 189) = 5.00$, $p < .001$. The depression/anxiety composite was a significant predictor of self-forgiveness.

The emotion, offense-related, and personality sets of correlates were significant predictors of self-forgiveness for interpersonal transgressions. The

perceived forgiveness/conciliatory behavior and relationship sets were marginally significant. For interpersonal transgressions, the emotion set of correlates explained the most variance in self-forgiveness, $R^2 = .63$, $F(1, 92) = 153.20$, $p < .001$. The perceived forgiveness/conciliatory behavior set of correlates explained a marginally significant amount of variance in self-forgiveness, $R^2 = .10$, $F(4, 89) = 2.34$, $p = .06$. Perceived forgiveness from the other person was a significant predictor. The offense-related set of correlates explained a significant amount of variance in self-forgiveness, $R^2 = .18$, $F(3, 89) = 6.29$, $p < .01$. Perceived severity of the offense was the only significant predictor in this set.

In addition, the personality set of correlates also explained a significant amount of variance in self-forgiveness for interpersonal transgressions, $R^2 = .23$, $F(8, 85) = 2.75$, $p < .01$. The depression/anxiety composite, the need to belong, and narcissism were significant predictors. Finally, the relationship set of correlates explained a marginally significant amount of variance in self-forgiveness, $R^2 = .03$, $F(1, 92) = 2.33$, $p = .13$.

For intrapersonal transgressions, all sets of correlates were significant predictors of self-forgiveness. The emotion set of correlates explained the most variance in self-forgiveness, $R^2 = .60$, $F(1, 102) = 156.71$, $p < .001$. Unlike interpersonal transgressions, the remaining correlate sets (perceived forgiveness/conciliatory behavior, offense-related, and personality) explained similar levels of variance for intrapersonal transgressions, $R^2s = .24-.33$, $Fs > 4.02$, $ps < .01$. In the perceived forgiveness/conciliatory set of correlates, perceived forgiveness and conciliatory behavior toward a higher power were both significant predictors. In the offense set of correlates, perceived severity was a significant predictor. In the personality set of correlates, relational self-construal was a significant predictor.

Total set regressions. Hierarchical multiple regression was used to examine which sets of correlates were most strongly related to self-forgiveness. Controlling for all other sets of correlates, each set of correlates – emotion, perceived forgiveness/conciliatory behavior, offense-related, personality/individual

differences, and relationship – were entered separately as the last block predicting self-forgiveness in order to examine of the amount of unique variance explained by each set. Like the single set regressions, three separate total set regression analyses were conducted: one for the combined transgressions, one for interpersonal transgressions, and one for intrapersonal transgressions. As seen in Table 8, these sets of correlates explained 81.4% of variance for the combined transgressions, 84.5% of variance for interpersonal transgressions and 84.7% for intrapersonal transgressions.

The emotion set explained a significant amount of variance above and beyond all other predictors for the combined ($\Delta R^2 = .25$, $p < .001$), interpersonal ($\Delta R^2 = .29$, $p < .001$) and intrapersonal ($\Delta R^2 = .15$, $p < .001$) transgressions. Furthermore, the perceived forgiveness/conciliatory behavior set explained a significant amount of variance above and beyond all predictors for intrapersonal ($\Delta R^2 = .03$, $p < .01$), but not for the combined or interpersonal transgressions. Perceived forgiveness toward a higher power was a significant predictor of self-forgiveness for intrapersonal transgressions.

The offense-related set explained a significant amount variance for the combined ($\Delta R^2 = .03$, $p < .01$), interpersonal ($\Delta R^2 = .03$, $p < .05$), but not for intrapersonal transgressions (this association was marginally significant; ($\Delta R^2 = .02$, $p = .09$). For the combined transgressions, perceived severity of the offense and the action vs. inaction item were significant predictors, whereas time since the offense and perceived severity were significant predictors for interpersonal transgressions.

In addition, the personality/individual differences set explained a significant amount of variance for both the combined set ($\Delta R^2 = .04$, $p < .05$) and intrapersonal transgressions ($\Delta R^2 = .06$, $p < .05$) transgressions, whereas it only explained a marginal amount of variance for interpersonal transgressions ($\Delta R^2 = .05$, $p = .09$). For the combined transgressions, trait forgiveness and relational self-construal were significant predictors. For intrapersonal transgressions, relational self-construal was a significant predictor. In addition, trait forgiveness, narcissism, and the

depression/anxiety composite were significant predictors for interpersonal transgressions.

Finally, the relationship set does not explain a significant amount of variance above and beyond other predictors for interpersonal transgressions ($\Delta R^2 = .00$, $p > .05$).

CHAPTER 4. STUDY 1 SUMMARY AND DISCUSSION
Discussion

The current research sought to examine potential correlates of self-forgiveness, as well as investigate whether these correlates differed for interpersonal or intrapersonal transgressions. Because there is so little existing research on self-forgiveness, this research provides a great wealth of information to be used in future research. In particular, this study attempted to demonstrate the importance of considering additional sets of correlates and make a case for separating interpersonal and intrapersonal transgressions in self-forgiveness research.

In Study 1, items from several existing measures of self-forgiveness loaded together to comprise the self-forgiveness measure in this study. Factor analysis revealed that these items had high communalities and high factor loadings. This group of self-forgiveness items appears to have an advantage over previously developed self-forgiveness scales because all of the items have face and content validity. Unlike previous self-forgiveness scales (i.e., the Multidimensional Forgiveness Inventory, Tangney et al., 2005) this measure was not correlated with narcissism and was negatively correlated with self-esteem. Furthermore, this measure was positively correlated with self-compassion, which suggests that the scale is tapping one's feelings toward the self to some degree.

Study 1 also demonstrated the importance of examining additional types of correlates. The separate single set regression analyses revealed that each set of correlates – emotion, perceived forgiveness/conciliatory behavior, offense-related, personality/individual differences, and relationship – predicted a significant amount of variance in self-forgiveness for both interpersonal and intrapersonal transgressions. Although some of these correlate sets were not significant in the total set regressions, they warrant consideration for use in future research.

Items related to emotions about the transgression emerged as key predictors of self-forgiveness. As hypothesized, personality/individual differences were generally strongly correlated with self-forgiveness for intrapersonal transgressions, and to a somewhat lesser degree for interpersonal transgressions. Although there

were no significant differences in the amount of variance explained by the personality set of correlates between interpersonal and intrapersonal transgressions in the total set regressions, there were differences in which measures were significant (i.e., relational self-construal was significant for intrapersonal transgressions, but not for interpersonal transgressions).

The addition of relationship-specific items provided a mixed picture. As a set, the relationship correlates predicted a marginally significant amount of variance in self-forgiveness when entered alone in the single set regressions. However, there were no significant correlations between self-forgiveness and any of the relationship correlates, and this set of correlates did not explain any unique variance in the total set regressions. Recall that there is typically a strong positive association between interpersonal forgiveness and commitment, closeness, and relationship satisfaction (i.e., McCullough et al., 1998); thus, the more committed, close and satisfied one is with a partner, the easier it is to forgive him/her for a transgression. It appears that for self-forgiveness, relationship factors may not function the way they do in interpersonal forgiveness, and they are not robust predictors of self-forgiveness in interpersonal transgressions.

Results were also somewhat mixed with regards to examining interpersonal and intrapersonal transgressions separately. When examining single set regressions for the combined transgressions and intrapersonal transgressions, all sets of correlates were significant, whereas the perceived forgiveness/conciliatory behavior set of correlates was only marginally significant for interpersonal transgressions. In addition, there were several differences in which sets of correlates predicted unique variance in the total set regressions. The emotion set of correlates predicted unique variance for combined, interpersonal, and intrapersonal transgressions. In contrast, the perceived forgiveness/conciliatory behavior set of correlates only predicted unique variance for intrapersonal transgressions. Furthermore, the offense-related set of correlates predicted unique variance for combined and interpersonal transgressions, but this was only marginal for intrapersonal transgressions. The personality set of correlates predicted unique

variance for the combined set and intrapersonal transgressions, but was marginally significant for interpersonal transgressions.

Total set regression analyses revealed few significant differences in the amount of variance each set of correlates explained for interpersonal and intrapersonal transgressions. However, there were several differences in which correlates were significant in each set. Therefore, it may be helpful to analyze the two types of transgressions separately.

Perhaps most importantly, Study 1 demonstrated that self-forgiveness has different associations with variables than does interpersonal forgiveness. For example, relationship variables such as commitment, closeness, and relationship satisfaction are not central in self-forgiveness like they are in interpersonal forgiveness. This suggests that we need to consider self-forgiveness to be a separate and distinct entity because extrapolating correlates from interpersonal forgiveness research may limit the progress of self-forgiveness research.

CHAPTER 5. STUDY 2 METHODS AND PROCEDURE
Study 2

Overview

The purpose of Study 2 was to examine the correlates of self-forgiveness in interpersonal and intrapersonal transgressions. It was important to replicate the patterns found in Study 1, and this conceptual replication was expected to establish converging evidence with regards to significant self-forgiveness predictors.

Participants were presented with scenarios in which they imagined themselves committing either an interpersonal or an intrapersonal transgression. Although asking participants to imagine themselves in a scenario is not as involving as asking participants to generate their own scenario, there are several advantages of this manipulation. First, giving participants a scenario to consider eliminates the possibility of participants not being able to generate their own scenario. In addition, various aspects of the situation – levels of severity, type of relationship, etc. – will be equivalent across participants. Given the range of transgression severity ratings in Study 1, it was important to make perceived similarity as similar as possible between interpersonal and intrapersonal transgressions in Study 2. Finally, previous research has employed the use of scenarios to study the willingness to forgive (i.e., Transgression Narrative Test of Forgiveness, Berry et al., 2001; Willingness to Forgive Scale, DeShea, 2003; Multidimensional Forgiveness Inventory, Tangney et al., 1999) and has demonstrated the effectiveness and success of scenario-based studies.

Method

Participants and procedures. Participants were 328 undergraduates enrolled in introductory psychology courses at Iowa State University. Eighty-eight participants were excluded from analyses for the following reasons: they failed the manipulation check ($N = 45$); they were not born in the U.S. and did not speak English as a first language ($N = 39$); they indicated that their data should not be used ($N = 4$). The final sample was comprised of 240 participants ($N = 113$ interpersonal

condition, *N* = 127 intrapersonal condition). The mean participant age was 19.40 (SD = 1.58). The sample was 52.5% female and 92.5% Caucasian.

All measures were completed individually using Survey Monkey internet-based experimental software. After providing consent, participants were asked to complete various personality and individual difference measures. Participants were then asked to read and imagine themselves in a scenario involving an interpersonal or intrapersonal transgression. Participants also completed a number of measures designed to examine the correlates of self-forgiveness. After completing these measures, participants completed a manipulation check and demographic questions, were thanked for their participation, and read a debriefing statement.

Measures

Personality/individual difference measures*.* Participants completed the same depression, self-compassion, anxiety, need to belong, neuroticism, trait forgiveness, relational self-construal, narcissism, and self-esteem measures used in Study 1.

Self-forgiveness scenarios*.* Participants read a scenario that contained either an *interpersonal* (cheating on one's partner with a co-worker) or *intrapersonal* transgression (partying with friends and missing an important final the next morning; see Appendix for scenarios). Scenarios were developed by the researchers and were pilot tested to insure participants perceived them to be similar in guilt (M_{inter} = 6.43, M_{intra} = 6.55, t(63) = -1.23, *p* > .05). Specifically, participants were told to:

> "Imagine yourself in the situation, picturing the event in your mind. Although it may be difficult to picture yourself in such a situation, please do your best.
>
> Put yourself in the situation, the surroundings in the event, and imagine the other people involved. To make it more realistic, try to use people in your own life that would likely be involved in this situation. [Interpersonal transgression only: The person you choose should be someone you like and care about.]
>
> Really try to place yourself in the situation. Think about how you would feel if you were involved in this situation in your

real life. Picture yourself thinking the thoughts, as well as
doing the behaviors, described in the scenario."

After reading the scenario, participants were reminded of these instructions
again, and were asked to continue with the study once they had taken the
time to imagine everything they were asked to.

Self-forgiveness correlates. Participants completed the same shame, guilt,
rumination, forgiveness from a higher power/other person, conciliatory behaviors
toward a higher power/the other person, perceived severity, action vs. inaction, and
time since offense measures used in Study 1. Because this study involved
hypothetical, imagined scenarios, it was necessary to alter the instructions and
wording for some items in each measure. Before completing each measure,
participants were reminded to picture themselves in the situation they read about
and rate how they *thought* they would respond. For example, self-forgiveness items
were altered to, "To what extent *do you think you could* forgive yourself for the
situation you *pictured yourself in*" and "I *would* hold a grudge against myself for the
negative things I did in the situation"; the conciliatory behavior toward a higher power
item was altered to, "To what extent *do you believe you could* be forgiven by a
higher power for the offense?"; the time since the offense item was altered to: "How
long ago *did you imagine* the situation occurring?"

Manipulation check. Participants were asked to give a brief description of
the situation they were asked to picture themselves in. Participants who could not
briefly describe the situation they were asked to imagine themselves in were
excluded from analyses (*N* = 88).

CHAPTER 6. STUDY 2 RESULTS

Results

Descriptive Statistics and Bivariate Correlations

Descriptive statistics for each measure are presented in Table 9. Independent sample t-tests were used to examine differences in mean levels of the personality/individual difference measures between interpersonal and intrapersonal transgression conditions. No significant differences were found (all *t*s < 1.74, all *p*s ≥ .08). Thus, it appears random assignment was successful. Bivariate correlations were conducted separately for interpersonal and intrapersonal transgressions (see Tables 10 and 11).

Correlations in interpersonal transgressions. As hypothesized, there was a strong negative correlation between self-forgiveness and shame, guilt, and rumination. These strong correlations suggest that emotions are central in self-forgiveness, even in hypothetical situations.

As expected, there was a positive correlation between self-forgiveness and perceived forgiveness from the other person. In addition, self-forgiveness was negatively correlated with conciliatory behavior from a higher power and the other person. Contrary to predictions, however, self-forgiveness was not associated with perceived forgiveness from a higher power.

In addition, self-forgiveness was negatively correlated with perceived severity. Self-forgiveness was not associated with time since the transgression. This is not surprising, given that the hypothetical situation was developed with the intention of making time since the transgression standard across participants.

Furthermore, self-forgiveness was negatively correlated with relational self-construal and positively correlated with narcissism. Contrary to predictions, self-forgiveness was not correlated with depression, self-compassion, state or trait anxiety, the need to belong, or self-esteem. This is an interesting difference from Study 1 in which self-forgiveness was significantly correlated with many of the personality/individual difference measures.

There was a significant negative correlation between self-forgiveness and commitment but no correlation with closeness. Taken together, this again suggests that, in self-forgiveness, the relationship set of correlates does not function the way it does for interpersonal forgiveness.

Correlations in intrapersonal transgressions. There was a strong negative association between self-forgiveness and shame, guilt, and rumination. In addition, self-forgiveness not correlated with conciliatory behavior toward a higher power. Moreover, self-forgiveness was strongly negatively associated with perceived severity and time since the offense.

There was a strong negative association between self-forgiveness and depression, state and trait anxiety, the need to belong, and neuroticism. There was a strong positive association between self-forgiveness and self-compassion and self-esteem. Surprisingly, there was no significant association between self-forgiveness and trait forgiveness, relational self-construal, and narcissism. It is interesting that, compared to interpersonal transgressions, there were more significant correlations between self-forgiveness and the personality/individual difference measures.

Correlations with attributions. There were no other significant associations between self-forgiveness in interpersonal transgressions and the other attributions.

There was a significant negative correlation between self-forgiveness and stability in intrapersonal transgressions, meaning that as levels of self-forgiveness increased, participants perceived that the transgression was something that was temporary, variable over time, and changeable. There were no other significant associations between self-forgiveness in intrapersonal transgressions and the other attributions.

Comparing associations with self-forgiveness. The Pearson correlations underwent *r*-to-*z* transformations in order to test for significant differences in magnitude between interpersonal and intrapersonal transgressions. Consistent with predictions, and contrary to Study 1, there were numerous differences in correlation magnitude between self-forgiveness and the personality/individual difference measures (see Table 12). Compared to interpersonal transgressions, there was a

stronger association between self-forgiveness and depression, self-compassion, state anxiety, trait anxiety, the need to belong, neuroticism, and self-esteem in intrapersonal transgressions (z_{diff} ranging from -2.85 to 3.18, ps < .05). Compared to intrapersonal transgressions, there was a stronger association between self-forgiveness and relational self-construal and narcissism in interpersonal transgressions (z_{diff} ranging from -2.81 to 2.76, ps < .05). In addition, compared to intrapersonal transgressions, there was a stronger association between self-forgiveness and conciliatory behavior toward a higher power in interpersonal transgressions (z_{diff} = -2.73, p < .05). Compared to interpersonal transgressions, there was a stronger association between self-forgiveness and time since the offense in intrapersonal transgressions (z_{diff} = 3.07, p < .05).

Additional Analysis

Action vs. inaction item. One hundred and twenty participants reported that the transgression they described was due to action (something they did), and one hundred and twenty participants reported that the transgression was due to inaction (something they failed to do). In addition, there were no differences on this item between the interpersonal and intrapersonal transgression conditions. Participants imagining themselves in an intrapersonal transgression were just as likely to report that the transgression was due to action (N = 59) and inaction (N = 54). Moreover, participants imagining themselves in an interpersonal transgression were just as likely to report that the transgression was due to action (N = 61) rather than inaction (N = 66).

Regressions

Like Study 1, both multiple (single set) and hierarchical multiple (total set) regressions were used to examine predictors of self-forgiveness.

Single set regressions. Multiple regressions were used to examine if, separately, each set of correlates was a significant predictor of self-forgiveness. Before analysis, correlations between measures were examined. In order to reduce the effects of collinearity, highly correlated measures in the same correlate set were averaged to form a composite. In the emotion set, shame, guilt, and rumination

were combined to form an emotion composite (α = .93). In the personality/individual differences set, depression, state anxiety, and trait anxiety were combined to form a depression/anxiety composite (α = .95). In the relationship set, commitment, closeness, and relationship satisfaction were combined to form a relationship quality composite (α = .95).

Regression analyses for each set of correlates were conducted separately: one using the combined transgressions (e.g., both interpersonal and intrapersonal transgressions), one using interpersonal transgressions, and one using intrapersonal transgressions. It was important to analyze interpersonal and intrapersonal transgressions together in order to see whether analyzing them separately produced different effects. The dependent variable was self-forgiveness, and the independent variables were the sets of correlates entered separately.

As seen in Table 13, all sets of correlates were significant predictors of self-forgiveness for the combined transgressions. For the combined transgressions, the emotion set of correlates explained the most variance in self-forgiveness, R^2 = .42, F (1, 238) = 169.33, $p <$ .001. The perceived forgiveness/conciliatory behavior set of correlates also explained a significant amount of variance in self-forgiveness, R^2 = .08, F (2, 231) = 9.66, $p <$ .001. Conciliatory behavior toward a higher power was a significant predictor.

In addition, the offense-related set of correlates explained a significant amount of variance in self-forgiveness for the combined transgressions, R^2 = .17, F (3, 211) = 14.00, $p <$ .001. Perceived severity of the offense was the only significant predictor in this set. Finally, the personality set of predictors explained a significant amount of variance in self-forgiveness, R^2 = .19, F (8, 231) = 6.72, $p <$ .001. Relational self-construal and narcissism were significant predictors.

All sets of correlates were significant predictors of self-forgiveness for interpersonal transgressions. The emotion set of correlates explained the most variance in self-forgiveness, R^2 = .44, F (1, 111) = 87.00, $p <$ .001. The perceived forgiveness/conciliatory behavior set of correlates explained a significant amount of variance in self-forgiveness, R^2 = .37, F (4, 106) = 15.49, $p <$ .001. Conciliatory

behavior toward and perceived forgiveness from the other person were significant predictors. The offense-related set of correlates explained a significant amount of variance in self-forgiveness, R^2 = .25, F (3, 97) = 10.75, $p < .001$. Perceived severity of the offense was a significant predictor.

In addition, the personality set of correlates also explained a significant amount of variance in self-forgiveness for interpersonal transgressions, R^2 = .32, F (8, 104) = 6.15, $p < .001$. Relational self-construal and narcissism were significant predictors in this set. Finally, the relationship set of correlates explained a significant amount of variance in self-forgiveness, R^2 = .04, F (1, 110) = 4.16, $p > .05$.

For intrapersonal transgressions, all sets of correlates were significant predictors of self-forgiveness, with the exception of the perceived forgiveness/conciliatory behavior set, which was marginally significant. The emotion set of correlates explained the most variance in self-forgiveness, R^2 = .44, F (1, 125) = 97.85, $p < .001$. The perceived forgiveness/conciliatory behavior set of correlates explained a marginally significant amount of variance in self-forgiveness, R^2 = .04, F (2, 120) = 2.65, $p = .08$. The offense-related set of correlates explained a significant amount of variance in self-forgiveness, R^2 = .16, F (3, 110) = 7.07, $p < .001$. Perceived severity of the offense and time since the offense were significant predictors in this set.

The personality set of correlates explained a significant amount of variance in self-forgiveness, R^2 = .34, F (8, 118) = 7.49, $p > .001$. Trait forgiveness was a significant predictor.

Total set regressions. Hierarchical multiple regression was used to examine which sets of correlates were most strongly related to self-forgiveness. Controlling for all other sets of correlates, each set of correlates – emotion, perceived forgiveness/conciliatory behavior, offense-related, personality/individual differences, and relationship – were entered separately as the last block predicting self-forgiveness in order to examine of the amount of unique variance explained by each set. Like the single set regressions, three separate total set regression analyses were conducted: one for the combined transgressions, one for

interpersonal transgressions, and one for intrapersonal transgressions. As seen in Table 14, these sets of correlates explained 70.7% of the variance for the combined transgressions, 79.5% of the variance for interpersonal transgressions, and 73.4% of the variance for intrapersonal transgressions.

The emotion set of correlates explained a significant amount of unique variance for the combined ($\Delta R^2 = .15$, $p < .001$), interpersonal ($\Delta R^2 = .05$, $p < .01$) and intrapersonal ($\Delta R^2 = .12$, $p < .001$) transgressions. Furthermore, the perceived forgiveness/conciliatory behavior set did not explain a significant amount of variance above and beyond all predictors for interpersonal or intrapersonal transgressions, but explained a marginally significant amount of variance for the combined transgressions. Conciliatory behavior toward a higher power was the significant predictor in this set.

The offense-related set explained a significant amount of unique variance for the combined ($\Delta R^2 = .06$, $p < .001$), interpersonal ($\Delta R^2 = .07$, $p < .01$), and intrapersonal ($\Delta R^2 = .05$, $p < .05$) transgressions. For the combined and interpersonal transgressions, perceived severity was the significant predictor, whereas time since the offense was the significant predictor for interpersonal transgressions.

In addition, the personality/individual differences set explained a significant amount of unique variance for both the combined ($\Delta R^2 = .06$, $p < .01$) and interpersonal transgressions ($\Delta R^2 = .13$, $p < .01$) transgressions, but no unique variance for intrapersonal transgressions. For the combined transgressions, narcissism was a significant predictor. For interpersonal transgressions, relational self-construal and narcissism were significant predictors. In addition, there were no significant predictors in the personality set of correlates for interpersonal transgressions.

Finally, the relationship set did not explain a significant amount of unique variance for interpersonal transgressions ($\Delta R^2 = .01$, $p > .05$).

CHAPTER 7. STUDY 2 DISCUSSION

Discussion

Like Study 1, Study 2 sought to examine potential correlates of self-forgiveness in interpersonal and intrapersonal transgressions. Unlike Study 1, participants were instructed to imagine themselves in a particular situation instead of writing about an event they previously experienced.

Items related to emotions about the transgression emerged as a key set of correlates of self-forgiveness. Correlations between shame, guilt, and rumination were strong for both interpersonal and intrapersonal transgressions (rs ranging from -.47 to -.65). In addition, analyses revealed a stronger association between self-forgiveness and numerous personality/individual difference correlates in intrapersonal transgressions.   Single set regression analyses revealed that the emotion set of correlates was significant for the combined, interpersonal, and intrapersonal transgressions.

As hypothesized, personality/individual difference measures were significantly correlated with self-forgiveness for intrapersonal transgressions, with the exception of trait forgiveness, relational self-construal, and narcissism. Interestingly, individual difference measures were correlated with self-forgiveness to a much lesser degree for interpersonal transgressions. In fact, the only significant correlations between self-forgiveness and individual difference measures for interpersonal transgressions were relational self-construal and narcissism.

When examining single set regressions, all sets of correlates were significant for the combined transgressions. For interpersonal transgressions, all correlate sets were significant with the exception of the relationship set, which was not significant. For intrapersonal transgressions, all sets of correlates were significant with the exception of the perceived forgiveness/conciliatory behavior set, which was marginally significant.

Although there were no differences in the amount of variance explained by some sets of correlates between interpersonal and intrapersonal transgressions in the single set regressions, there were differences in which measures were

significant. For example, the offense-related set of correlates explained a similar proportion of variance for the combined, interpersonal, and intrapersonal transgressions in the single set and total set regressions. However, perceived severity was a significant predictor for the combined, interpersonal, and interpersonal transgressions, whereas time since the offense was an additional significant predictor only in intrapersonal transgressions.

In addition, single set regressions revealed differences measures that were significant in the individual differences/personality set of correlates between interpersonal and intrapersonal transgressions. Although this set of correlates explained a similar amount of variance for both types of transgressions, relational self-construal and narcissism were significant correlates for interpersonal transgressions, whereas neuroticism, the need to belong, and trait forgiveness were significant or marginally significant correlates for intrapersonal transgressions.

As a set, the relationship correlates predicted a significant amount of variance in self-forgiveness when entered in the single set regressions, but did not explain unique variance when entered last in the total set regressions. Given the nature of the Study 2 task, however, it is not particularly surprising. It is possible that participants had a difficult time picturing themselves committing the transgression described in the situation. Moreover, it is possible that some participants did not have a particular person to imagine in such a situation. We asked participants whom they pictured in the situation, and responses included ex-partners, current partners, and imagined partners. It is possible that results would have been different if participants were currently or very recently involved in a close relationship.

In addition, there were several differences in which sets of correlates predicted unique variance in the total set regressions. The emotion set of correlates predicted unique variance for combined, interpersonal, and intrapersonal transgressions. In contrast, the perceived forgiveness/conciliatory behavior set of correlates only predicted unique variance for the combined set of transgressions, and this was only marginally significant. Furthermore, the offense-related set of correlates predicted unique variance for combined, interpersonal, and intrapersonal

transgressions. The personality set of correlates predicted unique variance for the combined and interpersonal transgressions, but not for intrapersonal transgressions.

Given that there were several differences in which correlates were significant in each set between interpersonal and intrapersonal transgressions in the single set and total set regressions, it may be helpful to analyze the two types of transgressions separately.

Something to consider is the level of perceived accountability in each type of transgression. With regards to the interpersonal transgression, the level of perceived accountability may be low; if the individual chooses not to tell the partner about the transgression, no one else knows about it and there are no negative consequences. In contrast, in the intrapersonal transgression, the level of perceived accountability may be high; even if no one finds out the individual missed an important final exam, there are still consequences (e.g., receiving a zero on the exam). Perceptions of accountability may have influenced results to the extent that the more accountable an individual feels about the transgression, the less likely it would be to forgive the self. Therefore, it is possible that the level of perceived accountability is responsible for the differences found between interpersonal and intrapersonal transgressions. This possibility should be examined in future research.

CHAPTER 8. GENERAL DISCUSSION

General Discussion

The current research examined correlates of self-forgiveness in interpersonal and intrapersonal transgressions. Across two studies, different types of correlates were used to predict levels of self-forgiveness for experienced (Study 1) or imagined (Study 2) transgressions. In examining the relationships between particular variables and self-forgiveness, we focused on emotion, perceived forgiveness/conciliatory behavior, offense-specific, personality/individual differences, and relationship correlates.

One of the first challenges was to determine how to best measure self-forgiveness. Existing measures do not adequately measure the construct, so it was necessary to develop our own scale. To this end, we selected face-valid items from existing scales and chose the best items from a factor analysis to form a composite self-forgiveness scale with good psychometric properties. Our composite scale exhibited associations found in previous research (i.e., a negative association between self-forgiveness and depression; a positive association between self-forgiveness and self-compassion), so it is likely that the composite is a sufficient reflection of the construct.

The next challenge was to examine the framework developed by Hall and Fincham (2005, 2008) to determine which additional theoretical constructs should be included. Most notably, this research added personality/individual difference variables and relationship variables, as well as additional emotion and offense-specific items. In addition, this research is the first (to our knowledge) to examine interpersonal and intrapersonal transgressions separately.

The final challenge was to examine similar and unique patterns of associations between self-forgiveness and the correlates in interpersonal and intrapersonal transgressions. The patterns from Study 1 are described below and are followed by a discussion comparing results from Studies 1 and 2.

Consistent with the hypotheses, shame, guilt, and rumination were strongly negatively associated with self-forgiveness in both interpersonal and intrapersonal

transgressions. In addition, these emotion correlates were consistently the strongest predictors in all analyses. These findings, coupled with the Hall and Fincham (2008) data showing that guilt was the strongest predictor of self-forgiveness, provide further evidence that emotion is a powerful force in self-forgiveness. It appears that it is difficult for individuals to forgive themselves for hurting the self or someone else when feelings of shame and guilt are strong and rumination about the offense is high.   Given the strength of the associations between shame, guilt, and rumination and self-forgiveness, it is crucial to include emotions in future research.

With regards to the perceived forgiveness/conciliatory behavior correlates, the results revealed differences between interpersonal and intrapersonal transgressions. Perceived forgiveness from and conciliatory behavior towards the other person (but not a higher power) emerged as somewhat weak correlates of self-forgiveness in interpersonal transgressions. These results suggest that when forgiving the self for hurting someone else, perceptions of forgiveness from the victim and transgressor actions towards the victim may be more important than forgiveness from and appealing to a higher power. In contrast, perceived forgiveness from and conciliatory behavior toward a higher power emerged as strong correlates in intrapersonal transgressions. This is logical given that there is not another person to apologize to in an intrapersonal transgression. Instead, believing that a higher power has forgiven the self may aid the self-forgiveness process. Thus, these aspects are also important for examining self-forgiveness, particularly for intrapersonal transgressions.

As hypothesized, perceived transgression severity emerged as a strong correlate of self-forgiveness in both interpersonal and intrapersonal transgressions. Contrary to predictions, time since the offense was generally not a significant correlate. This suggests that for self-forgiveness, time may not heal the way it can for interpersonal forgiveness. It is possible that time is a less important factor in self-forgiveness in general because the "victim" is the self and not another person. In interpersonal forgiveness, the victim can avoid or distance the self from the transgressor to escape painful thoughts and memories. When the transgressor is

oneself, however, it is presumably more difficult to ignore the situation. Therefore, time since the offense may not play such an important role in self-forgiveness.

Almost all of the personality/individual difference measures were associated with self-forgiveness in both interpersonal and intrapersonal transgressions. However, only a few emerged as significant predictors in the regression analyses, and there were some differences between interpersonal and intrapersonal transgressions. Results revealed an association between self-forgiveness and depression in both interpersonal and intrapersonal transgressions. Although no causal inferences can be made from this correlational data, it is plausible that high levels of depression may lead to a lack of self-forgiveness or a lack of self-forgiveness may lead to higher levels of depression. It is important to determine whether depression is an antecedent of self-forgiveness or a result of lack of self-forgiveness.

In addition, there was a negative association between self-forgiveness and anxiety in interpersonal transgressions. This suggests that anxiety is either hindering the self-forgiveness process, or that lack of self-forgiveness may lead to increased levels of anxiety. This finding is in line with the established association between low levels of self-forgiveness and high levels of depression and anxiety (Mauger et al., 1992). Because both trait and state anxiety were significant correlates of self-forgiveness in interpersonal transgressions, it is possible that anxiety is both detrimental to the self-forgiveness process as well as the consequence of low levels of self-forgiveness.

Interestingly, relational self-construal emerged as a significant predictor of self-forgiveness in intrapersonal (but not interpersonal) transgressions. This finding was not anticipated; in fact, relational self-construal was hypothesized to be a significant correlate of self-forgiveness in interpersonal transgressions. By definition, individuals with a high relational self-construal define the self in terms of close others (Cross, Bacon, & Morris, 2003). It is possible that when committing an intrapersonal transgression, individuals with a high level of relational self-construal may be considering the perspective of close others and what they would think of their

actions when considering forgiving the self. In other words, close others are an important part of the self-concept, and these relationships may be automatically activated when thinking about the self. When thinking about the transgression and contemplating self-forgiveness, a highly relational individual may also consider what others would think of their actions. The notion of other people knowing about the personal transgression may be detrimental to the self-forgiveness process.

Finally, narcissism emerged as a significant predictor of self-forgiveness in interpersonal transgressions, but in an unexpected direction. There was a negative association between self-forgiveness and narcissism. Although this association appears puzzling and is inconsistent with previous research (see Tangney et al., 2005), it is possible that this association is negative because narcissists may not perceive a need for forgiveness, or may not acknowledge that a severe transgression has occurred (recall that forgiveness cannot occur unless one has acknowledged that a transgression has occurred). In Study 2, there was a negative correlation between perceived transgression severity and narcissism, indicating that higher levels of narcissism are associated with lower levels of perceived severity. Individuals high in narcissism tend to have inflated self-views and perceive themselves as special; therefore, it is possible that these individuals may believe their actions do not warrant self-forgiveness because they have not done severe harm to the other person.

Taken together, these results suggest that certain aspects of an individual's personality should be measured when studying self-forgiveness. This information is particularly relevant and important for self-forgiveness interventions because particular personality traits may hinder the self-forgiveness process, or the lack of self-forgiveness may result in reduced levels of mental health. It appears that depression, anxiety, and narcissism may be the most important personality measures to examine in subsequent research. As previously mentioned, it is important to determine if self-forgiveness affects personality or personality affects self-forgiveness in order to make causal inferences.

Surprisingly, the relationship measures were not significantly correlated with self-forgiveness for interpersonal transgressions. In contrast, the commitment, closeness, and relationship satisfaction measures were all significant predictors of self-forgiveness in the single set regressions. As previously discussed, it appears that the quality of the transgressor's relationship with the victim is not crucial in the self-forgiveness process. This is a very interesting difference from the interpersonal forgiveness literature, and it is further evidence that self-forgiveness is quite different from interpersonal forgiveness and needs to be empirically studied as a separate entity.

It is possible, however, that the transgressor's relationship with the victim might affect this process. Commitment, closeness, and relationship satisfaction are important predictors of relationship quality in voluntary relationships (i.e., relationships that can be easily dissolved if desired, such as friendships or romantic relationships). In contrast, these relationship factors are not as critical in involuntary relationships (i.e., relationships that cannot be dissolved, such as relationships with siblings or parents). Therefore, ratings of commitment, closeness, and satisfaction may be more appropriate for individuals who wrote about transgressions in which they hurt someone in a voluntary relationship. Indeed, 68 of the transgressions described by participants involved a voluntary relationship (33 partner, 35 friend), whereas 26 involved an involuntary relationship (7 sibling, 19 parent; 6 relationships were neither – i.e., the participant described a transgression that involved a stranger). It is likely that commitment or closeness will be more variable and dependent on the transgression in voluntary relationships as opposed to involuntary relationships.

Comparing Results From Study 1 and Study 2

Like Study 1, shame, guilt, and rumination were strongly negatively associated with self-forgiveness in both interpersonal and intrapersonal transgressions in Study 2. In addition, the emotion correlates were consistently the strongest predictors in all analyses. Given the converging results regarding emotion

from Study 1 and Study 2, it appears that emotions are quite strongly linked to self-forgiveness.

Unlike Study 1, however, the perceived forgiveness/conciliatory behavior correlates did not predict a significant proportion of variance in self-forgiveness in Study 2. It is possible that just imagining the self committing a severe transgression is not enough to trigger the perceived need for conciliatory behaviors toward a higher power/other person, or for perceived forgiveness from a higher power/other person to have an effect on one's level of self-forgiveness.

Perceived transgression severity also emerged as a strong correlate of self-forgiveness in both interpersonal and intrapersonal transgressions in Study 2. When participants imagined themselves committing a transgression, perceived severity of the transgression was negatively associated with self-forgiveness. Thus, whether personally experiencing (Study 1) or imagining (Study 2) such an event, greater transgression severity was associated with lower levels of self-forgiveness.

In Study 2, almost all of the personality/individual difference measures were associated with self-forgiveness in both interpersonal and intrapersonal transgressions. Unlike Study 1, however, several personality correlates did emerge as significant predictors in the regression analyses in Study 2. Furthermore, there were several differences between interpersonal and intrapersonal transgressions. Narcissism, depression/anxiety, trait forgiveness, and relational self-construal were significant predictors of self-forgiveness in interpersonal transgressions, whereas the need to belong, neuroticism, trait forgiveness, and narcissism emerged as significant predictors for intrapersonal transgressions. It is interesting that the hypothesized negative association between self-forgiveness and relational self-construal emerged in Study 2, but not in Study 1. This means that, at least when imagining the self committing a transgression, the more participants defined the self in terms of close others was associated with lower levels of self-forgiveness. Individuals with high levels of relational self-construal value close relationships, so it is not surprising that those who value these relationships would have an especially difficult time forgiving the self for hurting a (presumably) close other.

Unlike Study 1, several personality/individual difference measures emerged as significant predictors of self-forgiveness in Study 2. In retrospect, this finding is not particularly surprising. In Study 1, participants wrote about an event they had personally experienced; in Study 2, participants were asked to imagine the self in a particular situation. Although using scenarios in Study 2 was beneficial in that there was more control over important study variables (i.e., level of severity, type of relationship with the victim), it is likely that there was less personal involvement for participants. Therefore, when asked to predict whether they would forgive themselves for the transgression, or whether they would seek forgiveness from a higher power, or whether they would feel guilty about the transgression, it is logical that a participant's personality would influence these ratings more than if they had personally experienced the event. Nonetheless, taken together, results from Study 1 and 2 suggest that certain aspects of an individual's personality should be measured when studying self-forgiveness.

In Study 2, commitment, closeness, and relationship satisfaction were correlated with self-forgiveness for interpersonal transgressions. In addition, the relationship quality composite predicted a significant amount of variance in self-forgiveness (but not a significant amount of unique variance). In the interpersonal transgression scenario, participants were asked to imagine someone that they really cared about in the place of the partner they were cheating on. It is likely, however, that some participants were not currently involved in a relationship and may have imagined someone else (e.g., not a current partner) in that role. At the end of the study, participants were asked to identify the individual they imagined in the situation. Responses included a current partner, a former partner, a good friend, or an imaginary partner. Finding a significant effect even though some participants imagined a relationship that did not actually exist is striking. This suggests that, when examining the association between relationship quality and self-forgiveness, it may be important to ask participants to recall (or imagine) a *voluntary* relationship with a *close other*. By focusing on voluntary relationships with a close other, this may eliminate noise in the data that could be masking the effects of relationship

quality. In other words, the lack of significant associations between self-forgiveness and relationship quality in Study 1 may have been due, in part to participants recalling interpersonal transgressions with family (e.g., involuntary relationships).

Emotion as a Mediator?

In Study 1, there were strong correlations between self-forgiveness and the emotion set of correlates (shame, guilt, and rumination) as well as some of the personality/individual difference set of correlates (particularly depression, self-compassion, anxiety, neuroticism, self-esteem, and trait forgiveness). In the regression analyses, however, the emotion set of correlates was a strong predictor of self-forgiveness, whereas most of the personality/individual difference measures were no longer significant. It is possible that emotions may be mediating the association between personality/individual differences and self-forgiveness. This is logical, given that personality/individual differences are associated with shame, guilt, and rumination; perhaps some aspects of personality affect the extent to which an individual experiences shame, guilt, and rumination.

Should Interpersonal and Intrapersonal Transgressions Be Examined Separately?

Analyses reveal a mixed picture with regards to examining interpersonal and intrapersonal transgressions separately. To help answer this question, interpersonal and intrapersonal transgressions were combined and analyzed together in order to compare these results to the transgressions analyzed separately.

The emotion set of correlates appears to be the strongest predictor of self-forgiveness across the board. In most cases, the emotion set explained the most variance, and correlations between self-forgiveness and shame, guilt, and rumination were strong. Regardless of the type of transgression, an individual's emotions are strong predictors of self-forgiveness. In this respect, it is not necessary to separate interpersonal and intrapersonal transgressions.

The perceived forgiveness/conciliatory behavior set of correlates appears to be relatively more important when examining self-forgiveness for intrapersonal transgressions, particularly those an individual has personally experienced like the

transgressions described in Study 1. This is logical, because by definition, an intrapersonal transgression involves doing harm to one's self. Appealing to a higher power appears to be useful for such transgressions. Thus, separating interpersonal and intrapersonal transgressions would provide useful information.

Perceived severity of the offense was a strong correlate regardless of the type of transgression. When examining transgressions that individuals had actually experienced, time since the offense was a significant factor in interpersonal transgressions but not intrapersonal transgressions. In contrast, when examining imagined transgressions, time since the offense was a significant factor in intrapersonal transgressions but not interpersonal transgressions. Therefore, separating interpersonal and intrapersonal transgressions would provide useful information.

It appears that it would be most helpful to separate interpersonal and intrapersonal transgression when examining the associations between personality/individual differences and self-forgiveness. Although the set of correlates was usually significant in both types of transgressions, the specific measures that were significant varied between transgressions. For example, the personality/individual difference correlates explained 7% of the unique variance in the total set regressions for both interpersonal and intrapersonal transgressions, but the specific correlates that were significant in each were not the same. In future research, it is important to consider how personality might affect self-forgiveness, as well as how self-forgiveness might affect personality.

Separating Interpersonal Forgiveness from Self-Forgiveness

When theorizing about the differences between interpersonal forgiveness (e.g., forgiving another person for a transgression) and self-forgiveness, it may be helpful to frame them in terms of cold and hot cognitions. In cold cognitions, decisions tend to be based on thoughts, whereas in hot cognitions, decisions tend to be driven by emotions (Kunda, 1990). In interpersonal forgiveness, closeness, commitment, and relationship satisfaction are the strongest predictors of forgiveness (cites). In addition, victims tend to consider factors such as the transgressor's

apology and time since the offense when considering forgiveness. Therefore, the decision to forgive a transgressor is likely to be a more deliberate, careful consideration of the situation and the facts surrounding the transgression. That is, the decision to forgive a transgressor is likely to involve evaluations of the quality and strength of the relationship with the transgressor, considerations about what *not* forgiving the transgressor means for the relationship, dissection of the motives behind the transgression, analysis of the transgressor's apology, etc. This is not to assume that emotions and hot cognitions are not involved in interpersonal forgiveness; rather, it seems likely that interpersonal forgiveness can be better explained in terms of cold cognitions.

In contrast, the emotion correlates (shame, guilt, and rumination) were consistently the strongest correlates of self-forgiveness. Thus, if individuals ruminate about their actions and feel high levels of shame and guilt, it is likely that they will also have low levels of self-forgiveness. In contrast to interpersonal forgiveness, it is not necessary to apologize to the self, participate in conciliatory acts toward the self, or consider how much not forgiving the self will damage the relationship with the self. In other words, it is not necessary for the self to consider the quality of a relationship, dissect motives for the transgression, or analyze an apology. In short, self-forgiveness may be less based on deliberate thoughts and more based on emotions one experiences when thinking about the transgression. Again, this is not to assume that deliberate thoughts and cold cognitions are not involved in self-forgiveness; rather, the results from this research suggest that interpersonal forgiveness may be better explained in terms of emotions and hot cognitions.

Limitations and Implications for Future Research

There were several limitations of this study. Because data were collected from undergraduate students at a large Midwestern university, the vast majority of participants were Caucasian and relatively young. It would be beneficial to replicate these studies in more ethnically diverse populations as well as in a non-college population. In addition, there were significantly more women than men in Study 1.

This may have affected the strength of the associations between self-forgiveness and some of the study variables that have established gender differences (i.e., relational self-construal or the emotion measures). However, because results from Study 2 (in which gender was balanced across conditions) were similar, it is likely that this is not an issue.

In addition, it is possible that the task in Study 2 was not involving for some participants. To account for this possibility, we asked participants if they took their tasks seriously, if their data should not be used because they were responding randomly, and to briefly describe the situation they were instructed to imagine themselves in. Participants who failed these manipulation checks were excluded from analyses, so presumably the final sample was comprised only of participants who felt involved in the study. Furthermore, we had to rely on a composite of items to measure self-forgiveness. Although the scale had good internal reliability, it is possible that the items included do not capture all facets of self-forgiveness. Future research needs to develop a comprehensive and reliable measure of self-forgiveness.

Finally, Study 1 relied on participant's recall and selection of a transgression. Research has demonstrated issues with retrospective memory, namely that individuals tend recall events in a self-enhancing manner (Schacter, 2001). It is possible that participants may have recalled and described transgressions in self-serving ways (i.e., by minimizing the effects of their actions on the victim). It is also possible that participants chose a transgression that did not reflect as poorly on themselves as another situation that could have also been used, or that participants discounted the true level of severity when asked to rate transgression severity. Participants were instructed to choose the most severe transgression from their list of transgressions, but perceived transgression ratings did range from 1 (*not at all severe*) to 7 (*extremely severe*). Thus, it is impossible to know whether participants did not have a particularly severe transgression to recall, or if they were biased in recalling the severity of the transgression.

Although there are limitations to these studies, this research makes several important contributions. To our knowledge, it is the first study to examine self-forgiveness for interpersonal and intrapersonal transgressions separately. Given the differences in predictors found between the two types of transgressions, it is an important distinction to make in future research. This research also identified important variables that should be included when conducting self-forgiveness research, namely personality/individual difference variables.

Final Remarks

When trying to predict whether Jeremy will forgive himself for cheating on his girlfriend or if Lisa will forgive herself for ruining her diet by eating an entire pepperoni pizza, the results of this research suggest that it depends on several factors. These factors include offense-specific factors such perceived severity of the transgression, various personality/individual differences such as relational self-construal and depression/anxiety, and perhaps most importantly, emotions (shame, guilt, and rumination) about the event.

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ENDNOTES

1. Offense-related correlates (perceived severity, time since the offense, and the action vs. inaction item) were not included in the factor analysis because they were related to several different sets of correlates (for example, the emotions set, the relationship set, etc.) These items are clearly related to the transgression, and were combined to form the offense-related correlate set. In addition, the attribution subscales were not included in the factor analyses because the inclusion of these subscales produced all uninterpretable factors. This may be due to low to moderately low subscale reliability.

2. In Study 1 and 2, all regression analyses were run two separate times: once with just the correlate sets, and once controlling for state affect. Results were identical, so only the original analyses were reported.

APPENDIX A. TABLES

Table 1
Summary of Hall and Fincham (2008) and Proposed Correlates

	Hall & Fincham (2008) correlates	Proposed additional correlates
Emotion	Shame Guilt	Rumination
Social-cognitive	Attributions Perceived forgiveness - higher power Perceived forgiveness from other	
Behavioral	Conciliatory behavior – higher power Conciliatory behavior – other	
Offense-related	Perceived severity of offense	Time since offense Action vs. inaction
Personality/individual difference		Depression Self-compassion Anxiety Need to belong Neuroticism Trait forgiveness Relational self-construal Narcissism Self-esteem
Relationship		Commitment Closeness Relationship satisfaction

Table 2

Study 1 Principal Component Analysis: Pattern Matrix Loadings

Correlate	1	2	3	4	5	6
Trait anxiety	.898					
Neuroticism	.886					
State anxiety	.841					
Depression	.740					
Self-compassion	-.632					
Need to belong	.565					
Self-esteem	-.528					
Trait forgiveness	-.443					
Relationship satisfaction		.920				
Commitment		.906				
Closeness		.893				
Guilt			.913			
Shame			.865			
Rumination			.774			
Conciliatory behavior HP				.774		
Perceived forgiveness HP				.747		
Perceived forgiveness OP				.614		
Conciliatory behavior OP				.512		
Relational self-construal					.899	
Narcissism						.910

Table 3
Final Correlate Sets

	Final correlate sets
Emotion	Shame Guilt Rumination
Perceived forgiveness/conciliatory behavior	Perceived forgiveness from a higher power Perceived forgiveness from the other person Conciliatory behaviors toward a higher power Conciliatory behaviors toward the other person
Offense-related	Perceived severity Time since offense Action vs. inaction
Personality/ individual difference	Depression Self-compassion Anxiety (state and trait) Need to belong Neuroticism Trait forgiveness Relational self-construal Narcissism Self-esteem
Relationship	Commitment Closeness Relationship satisfaction

Table 4
Study 1 Descriptive Statistics

Measure	Interpersonal N = 94		Intrapersonal N = 104		Mean difference
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	t-value
Self-forgiveness	3.07	.94	3.01	1.01	.39
Shame	2.71	1.00	2.62	1.08	.59
Guilt	3.18	.94	2.99	1.00	1.32
Rumination	2.42	.98	2.29	1.03	.95
Forgiveness higher power	4.98	1.75	4.83	2.03	.56
Forgiveness other person	4.67	1.91	--	--	--
Conciliatory beh. higher power	2.13	1.12	2.66	1.11	2.95**
Conciliatory beh. other person	3.67	1.26	--	--	--
Perceived severity	4.04	1.50	4.01	1.70	.14
Time since offense (in weeks)	12.15	16.49	12.19	17.28	-.02
Depression	1.43	.38	1.41	.39	.53
Self-compassion	3.02	.58	3.12	.63	-1.10
State anxiety	2.36	.68	2.38	.74	-.15
Trait anxiety	2.57	.66	2.54	.65	.32
Need to belong	3.65	.61	3.50	.70	1.63
Neuroticism	2.96	.71	2.96	.72	.04
Trait forgiveness	4.73	.97	4.66	.97	.47
Relational self-construal	5.34	1.13	5.16	1.02	1.20
Narcissism	5.13	2.96	5.28	3.24	-.34
Self-esteem	5.24	.78	5.23	.82	.13
Relationship satisfaction	3.59	1.00	--	--	--
Closeness	3.73	1.45	--	--	--
Commitment	4.07	1.14	--	--	--

Note: **$p < .01$. Conciliatory beh. higher power = conciliatory behavior toward higher power; Conciliatory beh. other person = conciliatory behavior toward the other person.

Table 5
Study 1 Correlations: Interpersonal Transgressions

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
1. Self-forgiveness	1											
2. Attr: Caus.	-.10	1										
3. Attr: Ext. control	-.04	.24*	1									
4. Attr: Stability	.18	.11	-.06	1								
5. Attr: Int. control	.01	-.22*	.25*	.17	1							
6. Shame	-.66***	.03	-.03	-.24*	.09	1						
7. Guilt	-.76***	.02	-.03	-.17	.04	.82***	1					
8. Rumination	-.73***	.08	.03	-.18	-.06	.68***	.67***	1				
9. Forgiveness HP	.17	-.02	-.11	-.20*	-.01	-.15	-.20*	-.18	1			
10. Forg. OP[a]	.16	.17	-.11	-.22*	.16	-.05	-.14	-.19	.52***	1		
11. Con. behav. HP	-.05	.02	.08	-.22*	.01	.16	.14	.11	.29**	.14	1	
12. Con. beh. OP[a]	-.17	.16	-.03	-.19	.19	.17	.15	.05	.16	.37	.30	1
13. Perc. sev.	-.40***	-.02	.07	.02	.03	.41***	.48***	.32**	-.09	-.18	.12	.11
14. Time since	-.03	.06	.05	.08	-.03	.20	.12	.19	.00	.02	.00	.01
15. Depression	-.31***	.14	.04	-.16	-.02	.39***	.32**	.44***	.07	.16	.08	.14
16. Self-comp.	.26*	.00	-.08	.24*	-.05	-.29**	-.18	-.34**	-.04	-.06	.02	-.07
17. State anxiety	-.25*	.05	.05	-.17	-.08	.30**	.19	.25*	.07	.07	-.02	.03
18. Trait anxiety	-.36***	.10	.07	-.29**	-.08	.38***	.29**	.43***	.03	-.05	-.01	.01
19. Need to belong	.09	.10	-.05	-.29**	.10	-.09	-.08	.00	.28**	.19	.19	.20
20. Neuroticism	-.19	.19	.05	-.41***	.02	.27**	.19	.30**	.14	.08	.16	.16
21. Trait forg.	.22*	.03	-.01	.10	.11	-.19	-.08	-.18	.05	.12	.15	.19
22. RISC	.08	-.02	-.10	-.10	-.03	-.21*	-.06	.06	.19	.13	.18	-.03
23. Narcissism	-.21*	.10	.03	.10	-.04	.11	.07	.13	-.14	-.11	.02	.04
24. Self-esteem	.23*	-.12	-.03	.11	-.02	-.43***	-.26*	-.23*	.01	-.10	.02	-.07
25. Rel. sat.[a]	-.05	.20*	.00	-.08	.22*	.01	.08	-.11	-.06	.32	.01	.46
26. Closeness[a]	-.18	.09	.04	-.22*	.11	.16	.27**	.08	-.05	.15	-.05	.27
27. Commitment[a]	-.18	.16	.09	-.19	.25*	.05	.11	.02	.02	.33	.07	.52
28. List inter.	-.08	.15	.08	.06	.08	-.06	-.07	-.18	.09	.02	.01	.04
29. List intra.	-.17	.00	.04	-.13	.00	.10	.16	.00	.07	.08	.16	.16

| 30. List total | -.04 | .09 | .08 | -.04 | .05 | .02 | .04 | -.12 | .09 | .06 | .10 | .11 |

Table 5 continued

Study 1 Correlations: Interpersonal Transgressions

	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24
1. Self-forgiveness												
2. Attr: Caus.												
3. Attr: Ext. control												
4. Attr: Stability												
5. Attr: Int. control												
6. Shame												
7. Guilt												
8. Rumination												
9. Forgiveness HP												
10. Forgiveness OP[a]												
11. Con. behav. HP												
12. Con. behav. OP[a]												
13. Perc. sev.	1											
14. Time since	.36***	1										
15. Depression	.21*	.18	1									
16. Self-compassion	-.19	-.05	-.50***	1								
17. State anxiety	.11	.16	.71***	-.54***	1							
18. Trait anxiety	.10	.11	.66***	-.55***	.72***	1						
19. Need to belong	-.22*	-.14	.17	-.13	.29**	.37***	1					
20. Neuroticism	-.04	.00	.59***	-.52***	.57***	.77***	.48***	1				
21. Trait forgiveness	.03	-.06	-.28**	.43***	-.33**	-.42***	-.02	-.32**	1			
22. RISC	-.08	.03	.07	.27**	-.11	-.03	.18	.11	.29**	1		
23. Narcissism	-.07	.08	.01	-.06	-.11	.08	-.01	.00	-.21*	-.10	1	
24. Self-esteem	-.11	-.10	-.48***	.53***	-.65***	-.54***	-.10	-.39***	.35**	.37***	.05	1
25. Rel. sat.[a]	.00	-.14	-.14	.22*	-.31**	-.27**	-.03	-.08	.22*	.01	.03	.25
26. Closeness[a]	.05	-.16	-.01	-.05	-.07	-.10	.00	.04	.10	-.05	-.06	.04
27. Commitment[a]	.00	-.05	-.03	.05	-.12	-.09	.13	.07	.14	.00	.11	.13
28. List inter.	.15	-.04	.03	-.01	.09	.04	.01	.06	.03	-.25*	-.07	.04
29. List intra.	.18	-.13	.12	-.11	.13	.12	.10	.19	.15	-.05	-.14	-.04
30. List total	.20	-.09	.09	-.07	.13	.09	.06	.14	.11	-.19	-.12	.01

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Table 5 continued
Study 1 Correlations: Interpersonal Transgressions

	25	26	27	28	29	30
1. Self-forgiveness						
2. Attr: Caus.						
3. Attr: Ext. control						
4. Attr: Stability						
5. Attr: Int. control						
6. Shame						
7. Guilt						
8. Rumination						
9. Forgiveness HP						
10. Forgiveness OP[a]						
11. Conc. behav. HP						
12. Conc. behav. OP[a]						
13. Perc. sev.						
14. Time since						
15. Depression						
16. Self-compassion						
17. State anxiety						
18. Trait anxiety						
19. Need to belong						
20. Neuroticism						
21. Trait forgiveness						
22. RISC						
23. Narcissism						
24. Self-esteem						
25. Rel. sat.[a]	1					
26. Closeness[a]	.73***	1				
27. Commitment[a]	.81***	.64***	1			
28. List inter.	.01	-.02	.03	1		
29. List intra.	.08	.10	.06	.39***	1	

30. List total	.05	.04	.05	.86***	.80***	1

Table 5 continued
Study 1 Correlations: Interpersonal Transgressions
Note: *p* < .05; **p* < .01, ***p* < .001. Attr: Cause. = Attributions: Causality subscale; Attr: Ext. control = Attributions: External control subscale; Attr: Stability = Attributions: Stability subscale; Attr. Int. control = Attributions: Internal control subscale; HP = Forgiveness from higher power; Forgiveness OP = Forgiveness from other person; Conc. behav. HP = Conciliatory behavior toward higher power; Conc. behav. OP = Conciliatory behavior toward other person; Perc. sev. = Perceived transgression severity; RISC = Relational self-construal scale; Rel. sat. = Relationship satisfaction; List inter. = Number of interpersonal transgressions listed; List intra. = Number of intrapersonal transgressions listed.

Table 6
Study 1 Correlations: Intrapersonal Transgression

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
1. Self-forgiveness	1											
2. Attr: Caus.	-.05	1										
3. Attr: Ext. control	-.15	.33**	1									
4. Attr: Stability	-.20*	.00	-.17	1								
5. Attr: Int. control	.25**	-.29**	.40***	.20*	1							
6. Shame	-.70***	.02	-.27**	-.18	-.29**	1						
7. Guilt	-.76***	.06	.08	.12	-.18	.83***	1					
8. Rumination	-.70***	.08	.21*	.09	-.19	.73***	.74***	1				
9. Forgiveness HP	.46***	-.05	-.12	-.09	.13	-.35***	-.34***	-.41***	1			
10. Conc. behav. HP	-.23*	.01	.08	.14	-.20*	.35***	.30**	.31**	.13	1		
11. Perc. sev.	-.56***	.02	.09	.27**	-.24*	.53***	.61***	.48***	-.23*	.29**	1	
12. Time since	-.16	-.18	.04	.20*	-.24*	.12	.17	.16	-.03	.35***	.25*	1
13. Depression	-.40***	.07	.09	.06	-.09	.45***	.42***	.49***	-.29**	.19	.27**	.05
14. Self-compassion	.30**	-.14	-.10	-.09	.22*	-.44***	-.41***	-.41***	.30**	-.10	-.19*	-.05
15. State anxiety	-.30**	.09	.14	.16	-.07	.45***	.41***	.44***	-.32**	.24*	.25*	.07
16. Trait anxiety	-.32**	.16	.13	.10	-.10	.43***	.37***	.45***	-.35**	.21*	.14	.07
17. Need to belong	-.21*	.05	.23*	.08	-.02	.34***	.23*	.22*	-.18	.00	.04	-.04
18. Neuroticism	-.33**	.18	.10	.04	-.04	.44***	.41***	.37***	-.29**	.15	.17	.07
19. Trait forgiveness	.31**	-.01	-.15	-.30**	.15	-.27**	-.31**	-.29**	.36***	.07	-.10	-.07
20. RISC	-.17	-.07	.05	.11	-.01	-.03	-.04	.07	.07	-.16	.07	.13
21. Narcissism	-.04	-.01	.02	.00	-.03	-.12	-.07	-.03	-.17	-.28**	-.05	-.09
22. Self-esteem	.18	-.11	.01	-.15	-.01	-.32**	-.30**	-.32**	.30**	-.09	-.20*	-.02
23. List inter.	-.25*	.19	.10	.27**	-.03	.28**	.26**	.26**	-.12	.14	.22*	.14
24. List intra.	-.26**	.17	.07	.24*	.05	.33**	.32**	.37***	-.09	.18	.27**	.09
25. List total	-.28**	.20*	.10	.29**	.01	.33**	.31**	.34**	-.12	.18	.26**	.14

Table 6 continued
Study 1 Correlations: Intrapersonal Transgressions

	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24
1. Self-forgiveness												
2. Attr: Caus.												
3. Attr: Ext. control												
4. Attr: Stability												
5. Attr: Int. control												
6. Shame												
7. Guilt												
8. Rumination												
9. Forgiveness HP												
10. Conc. behav. HP												
11. Perc. sev.												
12. Time since												
13. Depression	1											
14. Self-compassion	-.29**	1										
15. State anxiety	.75***	-.51***	1									
16. Trait anxiety	.66***	-.54***	.86***	1								
17. Need to belong	.21*	-.30**	.28**	.36***	1							
18. Neuroticism	.42***	-.43***	.62***	.74***	.45***	1						
19. Trait forgiveness	-.31**	.42***	.36***	-.48***	-.11	-.41***	1					
20. RISC	.08	.14	.01	.01	.20*	.01	.05	1				
21. Narcissism	-.14	-.05	-.19*	-.15	-.12	-.13	-.26**	-.18	1			
22. Self-esteem	-.56***	.58***	-.77***	-.64***	-.16	-.39***	.30**	.03	.15	1		
23. List inter.	.19	-.25*	.19	.23*	.22*	.12	-.29**	.04	.07	-.18	1	
24. List intra.	.27**	-.28**	.28**	.25*	.16	.09	-.24*	.02	-.11	-.29**	.62***	1
25. List total	.25*	-.30**	.25*	.27**	.22*	.12	-.30**	.04	-.01	-.25*	.93***	.87***

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Table 6 continued

Study 1 Correlations: Intrapersonal Transgressions

Note: *p < .05; **p < .01, ***p < .001. Attr: Cause. = Attributions: Causality subscale; Attr: Ext. control = Attributions: External control subscale; Attr: Stability = Attributions: Stability subscale; Attr. Int. control = Attributions: Internal control subscale; HP = Forgiveness from higher power; Conc. behav. HP = Conciliatory behavior toward higher power; Perc. sev. = Perceived transgression severity; RISC = Relational self-construal scale; List inter. = Number of interpersonal transgressions listed; List intra. = Number of intrapersonal transgressions listed.

Table 7
Study 1: Single Set Regressions Predicting Self-Forgiveness

Correlate Set	All transgressions				Interpersonal transgressions				Intrapersonal transgressions			
	B	SE B	ß	R^2	B	SE B	ß	R^2	B	SE B	ß	R^2
Emotion				.61***				.63***				.60***
Emo. composite	-.28	.02	-.78***		-.28	.02	-.79***		-.28	.02	-.78***	
Perc. forg./conc. beh.				.16***				.10+				.30***
Perc. forg. HP	.20	.03	.38***		.06	.07	.12		.25	.04	.50***	
Concil. beh. HP	-.19	.06	-.22**		-.04	.09	-.04		-.27	.08	-.30**	
Perc. forg. OP	--	--	--		-.19	.08	-.25*		--	--	--	--
Concil. beh. OP	--	--	--		.10	.06	.10		--	--	--	--
Offense-related				.25***				.18**				.33***
Perc. severity	-.31	.04	-.51***		-.27	.07	-.44***		-.33	.05	-.55***	
Time since	.00	.00	.05		.01	.01	.14		-.00	.01	-.02	
Act. vs. inaction	-.15	.13	-.08		.09	.21	.04		-.27	.17	-.14	
Personality				.18***				.21**				.24**
Depression/anx.	-.19	.07	-.32**		-.23	.11	-.38*		-.20	.10	-.33*	
Self-comp.	.22	.14	.14		.07	.22	.05		.36	.20	.22	
Need to belong	.11	.11	.07		.33	.17	.22		.01	.16	.01	
Neuroticism	-.02	.14	-.02		.02	.21	.01		-.10	.19	-.07	
Trait forg.	.10	.08	.10		.02	.11	.02		.12	.12	.12	
Rel. self-const.	-.10	.07	-.11		-.02	.10	-.02		-.21	.10	-.21*	
Narcissism	-.04	.02	-.12		-.07	.03	-.21*		-.02	.03	-.06	
Self-esteem	-.11	.12	-.09		.01	.17	.03		-.29	.18	-.23	
Relationship				--				.03+				--
Rel. quality	--	--	--		-.05	.03	-.16		--	--	--	

Table 7 continued

Study 1: Single Set Regressions Predicting Self-Forgiveness

Note: +p < .14; *p < .05; **p < .01; ***p < .001. Emo. composite = composite of shame, guilt, and rumination; Perc. forg./conc. beh. = Perceived forgiveness/conciliatory behavior; Perc. forg. HP = Perceived forgiveness from a higher power; Concil. beh. HP = Conciliatory behavior toward a higher power; Perc. forg. OP = Perceived forgiveness from the other person; Concil. beh. OP = Conciliatory behavior toward the other person; Perc. severity = Perceived severity; Act. vs. inaction = Action vs. inaction; Depression/anx. = composite of depression, trait anxiety, and state anxiety; Self-comp. = Self-compassion; Trait forg. = Trait forgiveness; Rel. self-const. = Relational self-construal; Rel. quality = composite of commitment, closeness, and relationship satisfaction.

Table 8
Study 1: Total Set Regressions Predicting Self-Forgiveness

Correlate Set	All transgressions				Interpersonal transgressions				Intrapersonal transgressions			
	B	SE B	ß	ΔR^2	B	SE B	ß	ΔR^2	B	SE B	ß	ΔR^2
Emotion				.25***				.29***				.15***
Emo. composite	-.24	.02	-.70***		-.25	.03	-.72***		-.22	.03	-.62***	
Perc. forg./conc. beh.				.00				.01				.03*
Perc. forg. HP	.03	.03	.06		-.03	.04	-.06		.10	.04	.20**	
Concil. beh. HP	.01	.04	.01		.07	.06	.08		-.09	.07	-.10	
Perc. forg. OP	--	--	--		.01	.04	.01		--	--	--	
Concil. beh. OP	--	--	--		-.10	.06	-.14		--	--	--	
Offense-related				.03**				.03*				.02+
Perc. severity	-.09	.03	-.15**		-.08	.05	-.13		-.08	.04	-.14	
Time since	.00	.00	.06		.01	.00	.20**		.00	.00	.04	
Act. vs. inaction	-.21	.09	-.11		-.08	.14	-.04		-.21	.12	-.11	
Personality				.04*				.05+				.06*
Depression/anx.	-.04	.05	-.06		-.11	.07	-.19		-.02	.07	-.01	
Self-comp.	-.04	.09	-.02		-.07	.14	-.04		.03	.13	.02	
Need to belong	.04	.07	.02		.11	.12	.07		.06	.10	.04	
Neuroticism	.05	.09	.04		.18	.14	.14		-.01	.12	-.01	
Trait forg.	.13	.05	.13*		.16	.08	.16*		.09	.12	.08	
Rel. self-const.	-.09	.04	-.10*		-.05	.06	-.06		-.21	.06	-.21**	
Narcissism	-.03	.01	-.09*		-.04	.02	-.14*		-.03	.02	-.08	
Self-esteem	-.11	.08	-.09		-.08	.11	-.07		-.18	.12	-.14	

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Table 8 continued
Study 1: Total Set Regressions Predicting Self-Forgiveness

Relationship				--			.00			--
Rel. quality	--	--	--	-.01	.02	-.03		--	--	--
Total variance explained		81.9%				84.5%			84.7%	

Note: +p < .14; *p < .05; **p < .01; ***p < .001. Emo. composite = composite of shame, guilt, and rumination; Perc. forg./conc. beh. = Perceived forgiveness/conciliatory behavior; Perc. forg. HP = Perceived forgiveness from a higher power; Concil. beh. HP = Conciliatory behavior toward a higher power; Perc. forg. OP = Perceived forgiveness from the other person; Concil. beh. OP = Conciliatory behavior toward the other person; Perc. severity = Perceived severity; Act. vs. inaction = Action vs. inaction; Depression/anx. = composite of depression, trait anxiety, and state anxiety; Self-comp. = Self-compassion; Trait forg. = Trait forgiveness; Rel. self-const. = Relational self-construal; Rel. quality = composite of commitment, closeness, and relationship satisfaction.

Table 9
Study 2: Descriptive Statistics

Measure	Interpersonal N = 113		Intrapersonal N = 127			Mean difference
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	α	t-value
Self-forgiveness	1.99	.86	2.05	.76	.82	-.62
Shame	3.83	.91	3.60	.98	.86	1.91*
Guilt	4.38	.71	4.08	.73	.82	3.20**
Rumination	4.07	.82	3.34	.91	.89	6.52***
Forgiveness higher power	4.87	1.94	4.77	2.06	--	.30
Forgiveness other person	3.06	1.52	--	--	--	--
Conciliatory behavior higher power	5.98	1.34	4.47	1.88	.87	6.95***
Conciliatory behavior other person	4.87	1.94	--	--	.76	--
Perceived severity	5.45	1.54	5.80	1.38	--	-1.84
Time since offense (in weeks)	2.63	3.03	3.99	2.87	--	-3.31**
Depression	1.55	.50	1.52	.44	.90	.50
Self-compassion	3.02	.51	3.00	.59	.89	.45
State anxiety	2.44	.72	2.43	.70	.87	.17
Trait anxiety	2.64	.61	2.58	.60	.81	.80
Need to belong	3.60	.59	3.46	.68	.82	1.55
Neuroticism	2.90	.71	2.89	.68	.80	.08
Trait forgiveness	4.56	1.07	4.65	1.04	.86	-.66
Relational self-construal	5.50	.98	5.25	1.18	.93	1.82
Narcissism	4.80	3.16	4.66	3.45	.76	.30
Self-esteem	4.53	.59	4.43	.64	.90	1.24
Relationship satisfaction	3.70	1.01	--	--	.93	--
Closeness	3.98	1.33	--	--	--	--
Commitment	3.87	1.07	--	--	.93	--

Note: *$p < .05$; **$p < .01$, ***$p < .001$. Conciliatory behav. higher power = conciliatory behavior toward higher power; Conciliatory behav. other person = conciliatory behavior toward the other person.

Table 10
Study 2 Correlations: Interpersonal Transgressions

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
1. Self-forgiveness	1											
2. Attr: Caus.	-.03	1										
3. Attr: Ext. control	-.15	.19*	1									
4. Attr: Stability	.03	-.11	.02	1								
5. Attr: Int. control	-.01	-.16	.07	.08	1							
6. Shame	-.58***	.26**	-.11	.03	-.03	1						
7. Guilt	-.51***	.20*	-.07	.08	.06	.75***	1					
8. Rumination	-.65***	.12	-.03	.00	-.02	.67***	.57***	1				
9. Forgiveness HP	.03	.11	.03	-.16	.27**	-.07	.02	-.19*	1			
10. Forgiveness OP[a]	.38***	.02	-.03	-.19*	.11	-.32***	-.21*	-.32***	.39***	1		
11. Con. behav. HP	-.42***	.00	-.03	-.01	.20*	.41***	.46***	.57***	.13	.02	1	
12. Con. behav. OP[a]	-.28**	.00	.13	.04	.15	.27***	.29**	.31**	.40***	.07	.52***	1
13. Perc. sev.	-.44***	.15	-.05	-.09	.15	.38***	.40***	.35***	.13	-.23*	.27**	.23*
14. Time since	.07	-.04	-.02	.00	.07	-.00	-.01	-.03	.05	-.03	.00	.06
15. Depression	-.04	.02	-.16	.11	-.36***	.06	-.03	.13	-.21*	-.08	-.06	-.12
16. Self-compassion	.05	-.05	.00	-.06	.14	-.14	-.02	-.02	.17	.13	.03	.24*
17. State anxiety	-.08	.01	.14	.12	-.28***	-.07	-.14	.04	-.20*	-.10	-.15	-.22*
18. Trait anxiety	-.08	-.04	.08	.08	-.25**	-.02	-.15	.08	-.15	-.09	.01	-.08
19. Need to belong	-.12	-.06	.02	-.05	.09	.17	.41	.21*	-.10	-.01	.22*	.04
20. Neuroticism	-.15	-.06	.08	.18	-.21*	.08	-.02	.16	-.20*	-.16	.08	-.00
21. Trait forgiveness	-.18	-.06	-.01	-.18	.12	.03	.14	.14	.22*	-.19*	.35***	.26*
22. RISC	-.42***	-.06	-.01	-.08	.03	.35***	.33***	.52***	-.02	-.10	.52***	.36***
23. Narcissism	.44***	.17	-.15	.06	.17	-.21*	-.24*	-.38***	.07	.11	-.32**	-.14
24. Self-esteem	.05	-.07	-.08	.01	.20*	-.08	.08	-.10	.19*	.08	-.00	.16
25. Rel. sat.[a]	-.17	-.02	-.08	-.07	.16	.13	.17	.23*	.06	.01	.16	.05
26. Closeness[a]	-.11	.03	-.08	-.01	-.01	.07	.11	.15	-.08	.03	.06	.00
27. Commitment[a]	-.21*	.01	-.05	.14	.15	.17	.18	.23*	.04	-.07	.24*	.05

Table 10 continued
Study 2 Correlations: Interpersonal Transgressions

	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24
1. Self-forgiveness												
2. Attr: Caus.												
3. Attr: Ext. control												
4. Attr: Stability												
5. Attr: Int. control												
6. Shame												
7. Guilt												
8. Rumination												
9. Forgiveness HP												
10. Forgiveness OP[a]												
11. Con. behav. HP												
12. Con. behav. OP[a]												
13. Perc. sev.	1											
14. Time since	-.01	1										
15. Depression	-.21*	-.09	1									
16. Self-compassion	.16	.06	-.53***	1								
17. State anxiety	-.29**	-.05	.83***	-.64***	1							
18. Trait anxiety	-.23*	-.10	.75***	-.64***	.84***	1						
19. Need to belong	-.07	.01	.36***	-.37***	.37***	.39***	1					
20. Neuroticism	-.15	-.01	.65***	-.60***	.69***	.78***	.53***	1				
21. Trait forgiveness	.06	.04	-.30**	.26**	-.28**	-.26**	-.09	-.23*	1			
22. RISC	.22*	-.09	-.06	.05	-.12	-.03	.28**	.09	.22*	1		
23. Narcissism	.08	-.00	-.25**	.07	-.29**	-.25**	-.08	-.24*	-.23*	-.21	1	
24. Self-esteem	.25**	.05	-.76***	.60***	-.79***	-.72***	-.36***	-.59***	.27**	.09	.30**	1
25. Rel. sat.[a]	.18	-.20*	-.18	.14	-.17	-.13	-.28**	-.23*	.38***	.14	-.11	.12
26. Closeness[a]	.13	-.24*	-.06	.16	-.12	-.05	-.17	-.14	.15	.15	-.08	.09
27. Commitment[a]	.27**	-.21*	-.06	.00	-.10	-.02	-.18	-.05	.19*	.20*	-.10	.05

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Table 10 continued
Study 2 Correlations: Interpersonal Transgressions

	25	26	27
1. Self-forgiveness			
2. Attr: Caus.			
3. Attr: Ext. control			
4. Attr: Stability			
5. Attr: Int. control			
6. Shame			
7. Guilt			
8. Rumination			
9. Forgiveness HP			
10. Forgiveness OP[a]			
11. Conc. behav. HP			
12. Conc. behav. OP[a]			
13. Perc. sev.			
14. Time since			
15. Depression			
16. Self-compassion			
17. State anxiety			
18. Trait anxiety			
19. Need to belong			
20. Neuroticism			
21. Trait forgiveness			
22. RISC			
23. Narcissism			
24. Self-esteem			
25. Rel. sat.[a]	1		
26. Closeness[a]	.63***	1	
27. Commitment[a]	.72***	.47***	1

Table 10 continued

Study 2 Correlations: Interpersonal Transgressions

Note: *p* < .05; **p* < .01, ***p* < .001. Attr: Cause. = Attributions: Causality subscale; Attr: Ext. control = Attributions: External control subscale; Attr: Stability = Attributions: Stability subscale; Attr. Int. control = Attributions: Internal control subscale; HP = Forgiveness from higher power; Forgiveness OP = Forgiveness from other person; Conc. behav. HP = Conciliatory behavior toward higher power; Conc. behav. OP = Conciliatory behavior toward other person; Perc. sev. = Perceived transgression severity; RISC = Relational self-construal scale; Rel. sat. = Relationship satisfaction.

Table 11
Study 2 Correlations: Intrapersonal Transgressions

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
1. Self-forgiveness	1											
2. Attr: Caus.	-.05	1										
3. Attr: Ext. control	.00	.40***	1									
4. Attr: Stability	.18*	-.09	.05	1								
5. Attr: Int. control	.11	-.21*	-.33***	.09	1							
6. Shame	-.64***	.02	-.05	.25**	-.11	1						
7. Guilt	-.47***	.01	-.06	.26**	-.08	.74***	1					
8. Rumination	-.60***	.01	-.03	.20*	.03	.67***	.51***	1				
9. Forgiveness HP	.17	-.03	.01	-.19*	-.04	-.12	-.03	-.22*	1			
10. Conc. behav. HP	-.09	-.07	-.05	-.22*	.00	.25**	.28**	.27**	.06	1		
11. Perc. sev.	-.34***	.09	-.18*	.11	.01	.31***	.29**	.32***	-.32***	.15	1	
12. Time since	-.32***	-.05	.06	-.01	.06	.10	.09	.17	.03	.07	.25**	1
13. Depression	-.35***	-.07	.00	.14	-.10	.41***	.30**	.29**	-.03	.16	.00	-.03
14. Self-compassion	.37***	.06	-.11	-.06	.24**	-.40***	-.19*	-.21*	.03	.11	-.04	-.01
15. State anxiety	-.46***	-.06	.08	.15	-.30**	.48***	.26**	.37***	-.08	.09	.03	.03
16. Trait anxiety	-.44***	-.06	.07	.22*	-.20*	.49***	.29**	.35***	.01	.06	.04	.06
17. Need to belong	-.33***	-.02	.15	.20*	-.11	.52***	.45***	.39***	.09	.14	.14	-.00
18. Neuroticism	-.49***	-.02	.12	.19*	-.21*	.56***	.38***	.40***	-.14	.16	.13	.08
19. Trait forgiveness	.06	.07	-.08	-.05	.14	-.08	.01	.03	.03	.18*	.05	.17
20. RISC	-.08	-.06	.04	.07	.02	.15	.17	.22*	-.08	.02	.08	.01
21. Narcissism	.11	-.07	.05	.03	.07	-.18*	-.23*	-.13	-.03	-.25**	.09	.03
22. Self-esteem	.40***	.12	-.03	-.11	-.37***	-.45***	-.30**	-.29**	.07	-.09	-.07	.04

Table 11 continued
Study 2 Correlations: Intrapersonal Transgressions

	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21
1. Self-forgiveness									
2. Attr: Caus.									
3. Attr: Ext. control									
4. Attr: Stability									
5. Attr: Int. control									
6. Shame									
7. Guilt									
8. Rumination									
9. Forgiveness HP									
10. Conc. behav. HP									
11. Perc. sev.									
12. Time since									
13. Depression	1								
14. Self-compassion	-.33***	1							
15. State anxiety	.68***	-.67***	1						
16. Trait anxiety	.62***	-.52***	.80***	1					
17. Need to belong	.16	-.24**	.35***	.40***	1				
18. Neuroticism	.52***	-.50***	.69***	.74***	.55***	1			
19. Trait forgiveness	-.22*	.38***	-.37***	-.35***	-.13	-.34***	1		
20. RISC	.02	-.06	.07	.05	.22*	.14	.13	1	
21. Narcissism	-.22*	.10	-.28**	-.26**	-.20*	-.22*	-.22*	-.07	1
22. Self-esteem	-.52***	.63***	-.76***	-.62***	-.23*	-.51***	.27**	-.02	.39***

Note: *p* < .05; **p* < .01, ***p* < .001. Attr: Cause. = Attributions: Causality subscale; Attr: Ext. control = Attributions: External control subscale; Attr: Stability = Attributions: Stability subscale; Attr. Int. control = Attributions: Internal control subscale; HP = Forgiveness from higher power; Conc. behav. HP = Conciliatory behavior toward higher power; Perc. sev. = Perceived transgression severity; RISC = Relational self-construal scale.

Table 12
Correlations with Self-Forgiveness: r-to-z Transformations

	Study 1			Study 2		
	Interpersonal N = 94	Intrapersonal N = 104	Z_{diff}	Interpersonal N = 113	Intrapersonal N = 127	Z_{diff}
Shame	-.66***	-.70***	.52	-.58***	-.64***	.73
Guilt	-.76***	-.76***	.00	-.51***	-.47***	-.40
Rumination	-.73***	-.70***	-.42	-.65***	-.60***	-.63
Forgiveness HP	.17	.46***	-2.25*	.03	.17	-1.08
Forgiveness OP[a]	.16	--	--	.38***	--	--
Con. behav. HP	-.05	-.23*	1.27	-.42***	-.09	-2.73**
Con. behav. OP[a]	-.17	--	--	-.28**	--	--
Perc. sev.	-.40***	-.56***	1.45	-.44***	-.34***	-.90
Time since	-.03	-.16	.91	.07	-.32***	3.07***
Depression	-.31***	-.40***	.71	-.04	-.35***	2.48*
Self-compassion	.26*	.30**	-.30	.05	.37***	-2.58**
State anxiety	-.25*	-.30**	.37	-.08	-.46***	3.18**
Trait anxiety	-.36***	-.32**	-.31	-.08	-.44***	2.99**
Need to belong	.09	-.21*	2.10*	-.12	-.33***	1.70
Neuroticism	-.19	-.33**	1.04	-.15	-.49***	2.94**
Trait forgiveness	.22*	.31**	-.67	-.18	.06	-1.85
Rel. self-construal	.08	-.17	1.74	-.42***	-.08	-2.81**
Narcissism	-.21*	-.04	-1.20	.44***	.11	2.76**
Self-esteem	.23*	.18	.36	.05	.40***	-2.85**
Rel. satisfaction[a]	-.05	--	--	-.17	--	--
Closeness[a]	-.18	--	--	-.11	--	--
Commitment[a]	-.18	--	--	-.21*	--	--

Note: *p < .05; **p < .01, ***p < .001. Forgiveness HP = Perceived forgiveness from higher power; Forgiveness OP = Perceived forgiveness from other person; Con. behav. HP = Forgiveness from higher power; Forgiveness OP = Forgiveness from

Table 12 continued
Correlations with Self-Forgiveness: r-to-z Transformations
other person; Conc. behav. HP = Conciliatory behavior toward higher power; Conc. behav. OP = Conciliatory behavior toward other *person; Perc. sev. = Perceived transgression severity; Rel. self-construal = Relational self-construal scale; Rel. satisfaction = relationship satisfaction.*

Table 13
Study 2: Single Set Regressions Predicting Self-Forgiveness

Correlate Set	All transgressions				Interpersonal transgressions				Intrapersonal transgressions			
	B	SE B	ß	R^2	B	SE B	ß	R^2	B	SE B	ß	R^2
Emotion				.42***				.44***				.47***
Emo. composite	-.22	.02	-.65***		-.26	.03	-.66***		-.22	.-2	-.66***	
Perc. forg./conc. beh.				.08***				.37***				.04+
Perc. forg. HP	.04	.03	.12		-.01	.04	-.03		.06	.03	.16	
Concil. beh. HP	-.12	.03	-.26***		-.25	.06	-.39***		-.06	.04	-.14	
Perc. forg. OP	--	--	--		.22	.05	.40***		--	--	--	
Concil. beh. OP	--	--	--		-.07	.05	-.13		--	--	--	
Offense-related				.17***				.25***				.16***
Perc. severity	-.22	.04	-.39***		-.28	.05	-.49***		-.15	.05	-.27**	
Time since	-.01	.02	.05		.01	.03	.05		-.06	.02	-.24*	
Act. vs. inaction	-.13	.10	-.08		-.24	.15	-.14		-.09	.13	-.06	
Personality				.19***				.32***				.34***
Depression/anx.	-.02	.06	-.05		.02	.09	.05		-.10	.07	-.20	
Self-comp.	.15	.12	.10		.15	.19	.09		.17	.14	.13	
Need to belong	-.06	.09	-.05		.04	.15	.03		-.17	.10	-.15	
Neuroticism	-.20	.12	-.18		-.09	.17	-.08		-.27	.14	-.24	
Trait forg.	-.08	.05	-.10		-.01	.07	-.02		-.17	.07	-.24*	
Rel. self-const.	-.12	.05	-.16*		-.29	.08	-.33***		.02	.05	.04	
Narcissism	.04	.02	.16*		.10	.03	.39***		-.03	.02	-.14	
Self-esteem	-.01	.13	-.01		-.12	.21	-.08		.15	.15	.13	
Relationship				--				.04*				--
Rel. quality	--	--	--		-.06	.03	-.19*		--	--	--	

Table 13 continued

Study 2: Single Set Regressions Predicting Self-Forgiveness

Note: +p < .14; *p < .05; **p < .01; ***p < .001. Emo. composite = composite of shame, guilt, and rumination; Perc. forg./conc. beh. = Perceived forgiveness/conciliatory behavior; Perc. forg. HP = Perceived forgiveness from a higher power; Concil. beh. HP = Conciliatory behavior toward a higher power; Perc. forg. OP = Perceived forgiveness from the other person; Concil. beh. OP = Conciliatory behavior toward the other person; Perc. severity = Perceived transgression severity; Act. vs. inaction = Action vs. inaction; Depression/anx. = composite of depression, trait anxiety, and state anxiety; Self-comp. = Self-compassion; Trait forg. = Trait forgiveness; Rel. self-const. = Relational self-construal; Rel. quality = composite of commitment, closeness, and relationship satisfaction.

Table 14
Study 2: Total Set Regressions Predicting Self-Forgiveness

Correlate Set	All transgressions				Interpersonal transgressions				Intrapersonal transgressions			
	B	SE B	ß	ΔR^2	B	SE B	ß	ΔR^2	B	SE B	ß	ΔR^2
Emotion				.15***				.05**				.12***
Emo. Composite	-.18	.02	-.52***		-.14	.04	-.34**		-.16	.03	-.51***	
Perc. forg./conc. beh.				.01+				.00				.01
Perc. forg. HP	-.03	.02	-.07		-.03	.04	-.06		.02	.03	.04	
Concil. beh. HP	.06	.03	.13*		.03	.07	.05		.05	.03	.12	
Perc. forg. OP	--	--	--		.06	.05	.11		--	--	--	
Concil. beh. OP	--	--	--		-.02	.05	-.04		--	--	--	
Offense-related				.06***				.07**				.05*
Perc. severity	.14	.03	-.25***		-.20	.05	-.35***		-.05	.05	-.09	
Time since	-.02	.01	-.06		.01	.02	.04		-.05	.02	-.20**	
Act. vs. inaction	.02	.08	.01		-.13	.13	-.07		.10	.11	.07	
Personality				.06**				.11**				.05
Depression/anx.	-.07	.05	-.14		-.14	.09	-.27		-.07	.06	-.15	
Self-comp.	.04	.11	.03		-.10	.19	-.06		.10	.13	.08	
Need to belong	.09	.08	.07		.04	.13	.03		-.01	.10	-.01	
Neuroticism	-.10	.10	-.09		.02	.15	.01		-.06	.14	-.05	
Trait forg.	-.06	.05	-.08		-.12	.07	-.15		-.04	.06	-.06	
Relat. self-const.	-.04	.04	-.06		-.18	.08	-.20*		.05	.05	.08	
Narcissism	.03	.02	.12*		.06	.02	.23*		-.01	.02	-.06	
Self-esteem	-.03	.11	-.02		-.07	.19	-.05		.06	.14	.05	

Table 14 continued

Study 2: Total Set Regressions Predicting Self-Forgiveness

Relationship				--			.01				--
Rel. quality	--	--	--	.03	.03	.09		--	--	--	
Total var. explained		70.7%				79.5%				73.4%	

Note: *p < .05; **p < .01; ***p < .001. Emo. composite = composite of shame, guilt, and rumination; Perc. forg./conc. beh. = Perceived forgiveness/conciliatory behavior; Perc. forg. HP = Perceived forgiveness from a higher power; Concil. beh. HP = Conciliatory behavior toward a higher power; Perc. forg. OP = Perceived forgiveness from the other person; Concil. beh. OP = Conciliatory behavior toward the other person; Perc. severity = Perceived transgression severity; Act. vs. inaction = Action vs. inaction; Depression/anx. = composite of depression, trait anxiety, and state anxiety; Self-comp. = Self-compassion; Trait forg. = Trait forgiveness; Rel. self-const. = Relational self-construal; Rel. quality = composite of commitment, closeness, and relationship satisfaction.

APPENDIX B. MEASURES

Note: Reverse-scored items are denoted with *

Self-forgiveness: Hall, J. H., & Fincham, F. D. (2008). The temporal course of self-forgiveness. *Journal of Social and Clinical Psychology, 27*, 171-198.

Thompson, L. Y., Snyder, C. R., Hoffman, L., Michael, S. T., Billings, L. S., Heinze, L., Neufeld J. E., Shorey, H. S., Roberts, J. C., & Roberts, D. E. (2005). Dispositional forgiveness of self, others, and situations. *Journal of Personality, 2,* p. 313-359.

Walker, D. F., & Gorsuch, R. L. (2002). Forgiveness within the Big Five personality model. *Personality and Individual Differences, 32*, 1127-1137.

Original items:

- "To what extent have you forgiven yourself for the situation you just described?" (Hall & Fincham, 2008)

- "I hold grudges against myself for negative things I've done" (reverse scored)
- "With time I am understanding of myself for mistakes I've made"
- "It is really hard for me to accept myself once I've messed up" (reverse scored)
- "I don't stop criticizing myself for negative things I've felt, thought, said, or done" (reverse scored; Heartland Forgiveness Scale; Thompson, Snyder, Hoffman et al., 2005)

- "A lot of times I have feelings of guilt or regret for the things I have done" (reverse scored)
- "I find it hard to forgive myself for some things that I have done" (reverse scored)
- "I am often angry at myself for the stupid things I do" (reverse scored; Forgiveness of Self scale, Mauger et al., 1992).

Modified items used:

1. To what extent have you forgiven yourself for the situation you just described?
2. I hold grudges against myself for negative things I did in the situation.
3. With time, I have become understanding of myself for mistakes I made in the situation.
4. It is really hard for me to accept myself since I've messed up in the situation.
5. I can't stop criticizing myself for negative things I felt, thought, said, or did in the situation.
6. A lot of times, I have feelings of guilt or regret for the things I did in the situation.
7. I find it hard to forgive myself for some of the things I did in the situation.
8. I am often angry at myself for the stupid things I did in the situation.

State shame and guilt: Marschall, D. E., Sanftner, J., & Tangney, J. P. (1994). *The State Shame and Guilt Scale.* George Mason University, Fairfax, VA.

<u>Subscales</u>: shame (S); guilt (G).

Please answer the following questions thinking about how you feeling as you think about the transgression you described. <u>Be as honest and as accurate as possible</u>. Use the following scale:

1	2	3	4	5
strongly disagree				strongly agree

1.* I feel good about myself.
2. I want to sink into the floor and disappear. S
3. I feel remorse, regret. G
4.* I feel worthwhile, valuable.
5. I feel small. S
6. I feel tension of what I have done. G
7.* I feel capable, useful.
8. I feel that I am a bad person. S
9. I cannot stop thinking about the bad thing that I have done. G
10.* I feel proud.
11. I feel humiliated, disgraced. S
12. I feel like apologizing, confessing. G
13.* I feel pleased about what I have done.
14. I feel worthless, powerless. S
15. I feel bad about what I have done. G

Rumination: Wade, N.G., Vogel, D.L., Liao, K., & Goldman, D. (2008). Measuring state-specific rumination: Development of the Rumination about an Interpersonal Offense Scale. *Journal of Counseling Psychology, 55,* 419-426.

<u>Directions</u>:

The following items describe reactions people can have to being hurt by others. Think back over your experience in the last 7 days and indicate your agreement or disagreement with the following statements.

1 = Strongly Disagree   2 = Disagree   3 = Neutral   4 = Agree   5 = Strongly Agree

1. I can't stop thinking about how I was wronged by this person.
2. Memories about this person's wrongful actions have limited my enjoyment of life.
3. I have a hard time getting thoughts of how I was mistreated out of my head.
4. I try to figure out the reasons why this person hurt me.
5. The wrong I suffered is never far from my mind.
6. I find myself replaying the events over and over in my mind.

Conciliatory behavior toward a higher power and other person: Hall, J. H., & Fincham, F. D. (2008). The temporal course of self-forgiveness. *Journal of Social and Clinical Psychology, 27*, 171-198.

Items:

- "I apologized to a higher power (e.g., God)/the other person for my behavior"
- "I asked a higher power/the other person to forgive me"
- "I did something to make amends for my behavior"
    - Rated on a scale from 1 (*not at all*) to 7 (*extensively*)

Perceived forgiveness from a higher power and other person: Hall, J. H., & Fincham, F. D. (2008). The temporal course of self-forgiveness. *Journal of Social and Clinical Psychology, 27*, 171-198.

Items:

- "To what extent do you believe you have been forgiven by a higher power/the other person for the offense?"
    - Rated on a scale from 1 (*not at all*) to 7 (*completely*)

Perceived severity of offense. *"*Please rate the severity of the transgression"; rated on a scale from 1 (*not at all severe*) to 7 (*extremely severe*)

Time since offense. "Please indicate, in weeks, how long ago the offense occurred."

Action vs. inaction. Was the transgression "Something you *did* do" or "Something you *failed* to do"?

Depression: CES-D: Radloff, L. S. (1977). The CES-D scale: A self-report depression scale for research in the general population. *Applied Psychological Measurement, 1,* 385-401.

Below is a list of the ways you may have recently felt or behaved. Please indicate how often you have felt or behaved this way in the past week.

> 0 = rarely or none of the time (less than 1 day)
> 1 = some or a little of the time (1-2 days)
> 2 = occasionally or a moderate amount of time (3-4 days)
> 3 = all of the time (5-7 days)

1. I was bothered by things that usually don't bother me.
2. I did not feel like eating; my appetite was poor.
3. I felt that I could not shake off the blues even with the help of my family.
4.* I felt that I was just as good as other people.
5. I had trouble keeping my mind on what I was doing.
6. I felt depressed.
7. I felt that everything I did was an effort.
8.* I felt hopeful about the future.
9. I thought my life had been a failure.
10. I felt fearful.
11. My sleep was restless.
12.* I was happy.
13. I talked less than usual.
14. I felt lonely.
15. People were unfriendly.
16.* I enjoyed life.
17. I had crying spells.
18. I felt sad.
19. I felt that people disliked me.
20. I could not "get going."

Anxiety: Spielberger, C. D., Gorsuch, R. L., & Lushene, R. E. (1970). *Manual for the state-trait anxiety inventory (Self-evaluation questionnaire).* Palo Alto, CA: Consulting Psychologists Press.

Subscales: state (S); trait (T)

For each of the statements below, indicate the degree to which you agree or disagree with the statement by writing a number in the space beside the question using the scale below:

1 = Strongly disagree
2 = Moderately disagree
3 = Neither agree nor disagree
4 = Moderately agree
5 = Strongly agree

1.* I am happy. T
2.* I am content. T
3.* I feel satisfied with myself. S
4.* I feel pleasant. S
5.* I feel secure. S
6. I lack confidence. S
7. I feel inadequate. S
8. I feel like a failure. S
9.* I am a steady person. T
10. I wish I could be as happy as others seem to be. T
11.* I make decisions easily. T
12.* I am "calm, cool, and collected." T
13.* I feel rested. S
14. Some unimportant thought runs through my mind and bothers me. S
15. I worry too much over something that really doesn't matter. T
16. I get in a state of tension or turmoil as I think over my recent concerns and interests. T
17. I have disturbing thoughts. T
18. I take disappointments so keenly that I can't put them out of my mind. T
19. I feel that difficulties are piling up so that I can't overcome them. S
20. I feel nervous and restless. S

Self-compassion: Neff, K. D. (2003). Development and validation of a scale to measure self-compassion. *Self and Identity, 2,* 223-250.

Subscales: self-kindness (SK); self-judgment (SJ); common humanity (CH); isolation (I); mindfulness (M); over-identified (OI)

HOW I TYPICALLY ACT TOWARDS MYSELF IN DIFFICULT TIMES

Please read each statement carefully before answering. Indicate how often you behave in the stated manner, using the following scale:

Almost never				Almost always
1	2	3	4	5

1. I'm disapproving and judgmental about my own flaws and inadequacies. SJ
2. When I'm feeling down I tend to obsess and fixate on everything that's wrong. OI
3. When things are going badly for me, I see the difficulties as part of life that everyone goes through. CH
4. When I think about my inadequacies, it tends to make me feel more separate and cut off from the rest of the world. I
5. I try to be loving towards myself when I'm feeling emotional pain. SK
6. When I fail at something important to me I become consumed by feelings of inadequacy. OI
7. When I'm down and out, I remind myself that there are lots of other people in the world feeling like I am. CH
8. When times are really difficult, I tend to be tough on myself. SJ
9. When something upsets me I try to keep my emotions in balance. M
10. When I feel inadequate in some way, I try to remind myself that feelings of inadequacy are shared by most people. CH
11. I'm intolerant and impatient towards those aspects of my personality I don't like. SJ
12. When I'm going through a very hard time, I give myself the caring and tenderness I need. SK
13. When I'm feeling down, I tend to feel like most other people are probably happier than I am. I
14. When something painful happens I try to take a balanced view of the situation. M
15. I try to see my failings as part of the human condition. CH
16. When I see aspects of myself that I don't like, I get down on myself. SJ
17. When I fail at something important to me I try to keep things in perspective. M
18. When I'm really struggling, I tend to feel like other people must be having an easier

time of it. I

19. I'm kind to myself when I'm experiencing suffering. SK
20. When something upsets me I get carried away with my feelings. OI
21. I can be a bit cold-hearted towards myself when I'm experiencing suffering. SJ
22. When I'm feeling down I try to approach my feelings with curiosity and openness. M
23. I'm tolerant of my own flaws and inadequacies. SK
24. When something painful happens I tend to blow the incident out of proportion. OI
25. When I fail at something that's important to me, I tend to feel alone in my failure. I
26. I try to be understanding and patient towards those aspects of my personality I don't like. SK

Need to belong (revised): Leary, M. R., Kelly, K. M., Cottrell, C. A., & Schreindorfer, L. S. (2007). Individual differences in the need to belong: Mapping the nomological network. *Unpublished manuscript*, Duke University.

For each of the statements below, indicate the degree to which you agree or disagree with the statement by writing a number in the space beside the question using the scale below:

    1 = Strongly disagree
    2 = Moderately disagree
    3 = Neither agree nor disagree
    4 = Moderately agree
    5 = Strongly agree

1.* If other people don't seem to accept me, I don't let it bother me.

2. I try hard not to do things that will make other people avoid or reject me.

3.* I seldom worry about whether other people care about me.

4. I need to feel that there are people I can turn to in times of need.

5. I want other people to accept me.

6. I do not like being alone.

7.* Being apart from my friends for long periods of time does not bother me.

8. I have a strong need to belong.

9. It bothers me a great deal when I am not included in other people's plans.

10. My feelings are easily hurt when I feel that others do not accept me.

Neuroticism: John, O. P. (1990). The "Big Five" factor taxonomy: Dimensions of personality in the natural language and in questionnaires. In L. A. Pervin (Ed.), *Handbook of personality: Theory and research* (pp. 66-100). New York: Guilford.

Subscales: extraversion (E); openness to experience (O), conscientiousness (C); agreeableness (A); neuroticism (N); **only Neuroticism subscale items will be included.**

The Big Five Inventory (BFI)

Here are a number of characteristics that may or may not apply to you. For example, do you agree that you are someone who likes to spend time with others? Please write a number next to each statement to indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with that statement.

1 = Strongly Disagree   2 = Mildly Disagree   3 = Agree and Disagree Equally   4 = Mildly Agree   5 = Strongly Agree

I see myself as someone who...

1. Is talkative (E)
2.*Tends to find fault with others (A)
3. Does a thorough job (C)
4. Is depressed, blue (N)
5. Is original, comes up with new ideas (O)
6.* Is reserved (E)
7. Is helpful and unselfish with others (A)
8.* Can be somewhat careless (C)
9.* Is relaxed, handles stress well (N)
10. Is curious about many things (O)
11. Is full of energy (E)
12.* Starts quarrels with others (A)
13. Is a reliable worker (C)
14. Can be tense (N)
15. Is ingenious, a deep thinker (O)
16. Generates a lot of enthusiasm (E)
17. Has a forgiving nature (A)
18.* Tends to be disorganized (C)
19. Worries a lot (N)
20. Has an active imagination (O)
21.* Tends to be quiet (E)
22. Is generally trusting (A)
23.* Tends to be lazy (C)
24.* Emotionally stable, not easily upset (N)
25. Is inventive (O)
26. Has an assertive personality (E)
27.* Can be cold and aloof (A)
28. Perseveres until the task is finished (C)
29. Can be moody (N)
30. Values artistic, aesthetic experience (O)
31.* Is sometimes shy, inhibited (E)
32. Considerate/kind to almost everyone (A)
33. Does things efficiently (C)
34.* Remains calm in tense situations (N)
35.* Prefers work that is routine (O)
36. Is outgoing, sociable (E)
37.* Is sometimes rude to others (A)
38. Makes plans/follows through (C)
39. Gets nervous easily (N)
40. Likes to reflect, play with ideas (O)
41.* Has few artistic interests
42. Likes to cooperate with others (A)
43. Is easily distracted (C)
44. Is sophisticated in art, music, lit. (O)

Indicate the degree to which you agree or disagree with each statement below by using the following scale:

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Strongly disagree			Neither agree nor disagree			Strongly agree

1.* People close to me probably think I hold a grudge too long.

2. I can forgive a friend for almost anything.

3.* If someone treats me badly, I treat him or her the same.

4. I try to forgive others even when they don't feel guilty for what they did.

5. I can usually forgive and forget an insult.

6.* I feel bitter about many of my relationships.

7.* Even after I forgive someone, things often come back to me that I resent.

8.* There are some things for which I could never forgive even a loved one.

9. I have always forgiven those who have hurt me.

10. I am a forgiving person.

Relational self-construal: Cross, S. E., Bacon, P., & Morris, M. (2000). The relational-interdependent self-construal and relationships. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 78*, 791-808.

Please indicate the extent to which you agree with each statement. In the space next to each statement, please write the number that best represents how you feel about the statement. As shown below, "1" means you strongly disagree with the statement and "7" means you strongly agree with the statement.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
strongly						strongly
disagree						agree

1. My close relationships are an important reflection of who I am.

2. When I feel very close to someone, it often feels to me like that person is an important part of who I am.

3. I usually feel a strong sense of pride when someone close to me has an important accomplishment.

4. I think one of the most important parts of who I am can be captured by looking at my close friends and understanding who they are.

5. When I think of myself, I often think of my close friends or family as well.

6. In general, my close relationships are an important part of my self-image.

7.* Overall, my close relationships have very little to do with how I feel about myself.

8.* My close relationships are unimportant to my sense of what kind of person I am.

9.   If a person insults someone close to me, I feel personally insulted myself.

10. My sense of pride comes from knowing I have close friends.

11. When I establish a close friendship with someone, I usually develop a strong sense of identification with that person.

Narcissism: Ames, D. R., Rose, P., & Anderson, C. P. (2006). The NPI-16 as a short measure of narcissism. *Journal of Research in Personality*, 40, 440-450.

Note: (N) denotes narcissistic response

1. I know that I am good because everybody keeps telling me so (N) -- When people compliment me I sometimes get embarrassed

2. I like to be the center of attention (N) -- I prefer to blend in with the crowd

3. I think I am a special person (N) -- I am no better or nor worse than most people

4. I like having authority over people (N) -- I don't mind following orders

5. I find it easy to manipulate people (N) -- I don't like it when I find myself manipulating people

6. I insist upon getting the respect that is due me (N) -- I usually get the respect that I deserve

7. I am apt to show off if I get the chance (N) -- I try not to be a show off

8. I always know what I am doing (N) -- Sometimes I am not sure of what I am doing

9. Everybody likes to hear my stories (N) -- Sometimes I tell good stories

10. I expect a great deal from other people (N) -- I like to do things for other people

11. I really like to be the center of attention (N) -- It makes me uncomfortable to be the center of attention

12. People always seem to recognize my authority (N) -- Being an authority doesn't mean that much to me

13. I am going to be a great person (N) -- I hope I am going to be successful

14. I can make anybody believe anything I want them to (N) -- People sometimes believe what I tell them

15. I am more capable than other people (N) -- There is a lot that I can learn from other people

16. I am an extraordinary person (N) -- I am much like everybody else

Global self-esteem: Rosenberg, M. (1965). *Society and the Adolescent Self-Image.* Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Below is a list of statements dealing with your general feelings about yourself. Indicate the degree to which you agree or disagree with each statement below by using the following scale:

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Strongly disagree			Neither agree nor disagree			Strongly agree

1. On the whole, I am satisfied with myself.
2.* At times, I think I am no good at all.
3. I feel that I have a number of good qualities.
4. I am able to do things as well as most other people.
5.* I feel I do not have much to be proud of.
6.* I certainly feel useless at times.
7. I feel that I'm a person of worth, at least on an equal plane with others.
8. I wish I could have more respect for myself.
9.* All in all, I am inclined to feel that I am a failure.
10. I take a positive attitude toward myself.

Commitment*:* Rusbult, C. E., Martz, J. M., & Agnew, C. R. (1998). The investment model scale: Measuring commitment level, satisfaction level, quality of alternatives, and investment size. *Personal Relationships, 5*, 357-391.

These questions ask about your relationship with the person you wrote about. For each statement, please indicate how much you agree or disagree with the statement using the scale below:

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Disagree	Disagree Somewhat	Neutral	Agree Somewhat	Strongly Agree

1. I am committed to maintaining my relationship with this person.
2. I want our relationship to last for a very long time.
3. I feel very attached to our relationship – very strongly linked to this person.
4. (omitted due to lack of relevance – participants may not write about an intimate relationship)
5.* I would not feel very upset if our relationship were to end in the near future.
6. I want our relationship to last forever.
7. I am oriented toward the long-term future of my relationship (for example, I imagine being friends with this person several years from now).

Closeness: Aron, A., Aron, E. M., & Smollan, D. (1992). Inclusion of Other in the Self Scale and the structure of interpersonal closeness. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 63*, 596-612.

To what extent do you think about the person you described when you think about yourself? To answer that question, consider the figures below. They represent different types of relationships.

For a moment, think of yourself as the gray circle, and the person involved in the transgression as the white circle. Consider how you think about yourself and this person. Which of the figures best represents the way you think about your relationship with this person? Please choose one figure.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
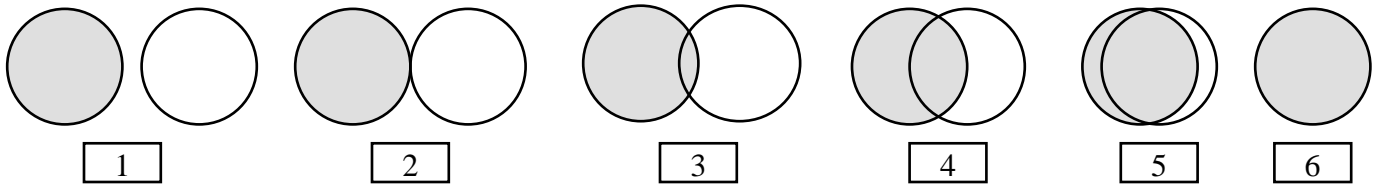
Relationship satisfaction: Hendrick, S. S. (1988). A generic measure of relationship satisfaction. *Journal of Marriage and the Family, 50*, 93-98.

1. How well does this person meet your needs?
2. In general, how satisfied are you with your relationship?
3. How good is your relationship compared to most?
4. How often do you wish you hadn't gotten into this relationship?
5. To what extent has your relationship met your original expectations?
6. How much do you like the other person?
7. How many problems are there in your relationship?

Subscales: locus of causality (L); external control (E); stability (S); personal control (P)

Think about the situation you previously described. The items below concern your impression or opinions of the cause or causes of your behavior. Please choose one response for each of the following questions.

Is the cause something:

L 1. That reflects an aspect of yourself 1 …… 9 reflects an aspect of the situation
P 2. Manageable by you   1 …… 9 not manageable by you
S 3. Permanent   1 …… 9 temporary
P 4. You can regulate   1 …… 9 you cannot regulate
E 5. Over which others have control   1 …… 9 over which others have no control
L 6. Inside of you   1 …… 9 outside of you
S 7. Stable over time   1 …… 9 variable over time
E 8. Under the power of other people   1 …… 9 not under the power of other people
L 9. Something about you   1 …… 9 something about others
P 10. Over which you have power   1 …… 9 under which you have no power
S 11. Unchangeable   1 …… 9 changeable
E 12. Other people can regulate   1 …… 9 other people cannot regulate

Subscales: positive affect (P); negative affect (N)

Please answer the following questions thinking about how you feel right now – that is, at the PRESENT MOMENT. Use the scale below for your responses.

1	2	3	4	5
Very slightly or not at all	A little	Moderately	Quite a bit	Extremely

interested P	irritable N
distressed N	alert P
excited P	ashamed N
upset N	inspired P
strong P	nervous N
guilty N	determined P
scared N	attentive P
hostile N	jittery N
enthusiastic P	active P
proud P	afraid N

Demographics

What is your age?

What is your gender?

What is your major?

What is your ethnicity?

What is your relationship status? (single, short-term relationship, long-term relationship, engaged, married)

Have you ever been in counseling?

Study 2: Interpersonal and Intrapersonal Scenarios

Interpersonal

For one of your classes, you have been assigned a group project that is due at the end of the semester. This project is really involved and is worth half of your final grade, so your group meets at least once a week. You find one of your group members to be quite attractive. At the group meetings, you and this group member get along really well; you have similar interests and have compatible personalities. Even though you are committed to your partner and are typically happy in your relationship, you often find yourself flirting with this group member. Sometimes the two of you stay later than the rest of the group to work on a certain part of the project. You don't mind staying later because it means you get to spend more time with each other and the nights together are usually fun. Tonight, you both decide to stay late again. After working for a while, you and the group member get stuck on an issue and decide to take a break. Your partner calls your cell phone, but you decide to ignore the call and turn your phone to vibrate. You chat playfully with the group member, and one thing leads to another. You find yourself in a close embrace, passionately kissing the group member. Even though you feel guilty and know you shouldn't be doing this, you don't stop. After you are finished working, you go back to your apartment to find your partner, who has cooked you a romantic dinner because you were out working so late.

Intrapersonal

It's finals week, and your schedule is packed. You're doing well in most of your classes, so you don't need to ace these finals to get a good grade in the class. For one class, however, you need to do really well on the final exam in order to get a decent grade. If you don't get at least a B- on the final, your scholarship is in jeopardy because your GPA will be too low. You make a study schedule for the week and make sure to give yourself extra time to prepare for the important final on Friday morning. On Thursday night, some of your friends stop by your dorm room and tell you about a huge party happening that night. You tell them that you should study for your last and most important final that's in the morning. Your friends say that you should come out and take a break; after all, you can study more when you get back. You give in and decide to go to the party. You get back late and are too tired to study anymore. You set your alarm to get up really early in the morning to study. You wake up to find the sun shining on your face. Panicked, you look at the clock because you set your alarm for 6:00am. It's 10:30am, but your final was at 9:00am. Because you overslept, you will receive a zero on the exam and a poor final grade.