SELF-FORGIVENESS INTERVENTIONS FOR WOMEN EXPERIENCING A BREAKUP

A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy at Virginia Commonwealth University

By: KATHRYN L. CAMPANA, M.S.

B.S., Virginia Commonwealth University, 2003
M.S., Virginia Commonwealth University, Monroe Park Campus, 2006

Director: Everett L. Worthington, Jr., Ph.D.
Professor of Psychology
Department of Psychology

Virginia Commonwealth University
Richmond, Virginia
May 2010
Acknowledgements

I am extremely grateful to be at this point. After having encountered the significant (ha!) obstacles of 1) changing the entire methods due to lack of participants in a community-based sample, and 2) (not quite) overcoming the theft of all my dissertation materials (books, notes, statistical output print outs, laptop, and backed up data on flash drives), the completion of this dissertation seemed like a very distant goal not so long ago.

I would like to thank Dr. Ev Worthington, an extremely patient and hardworking man, for his guidance during this project. In a more general and broad-reaching sense, I would also like to thank him for his guidance over the past several years that I have known him. Since working with him as an undergraduate, I feel that I have grown in many ways, both professionally and personally. Working with you has helped shape me into the person who I am today.

I am also grateful to my committee members (Drs. Davis, Green, McCreary, and West); your suggestions and support during this project have been much appreciated. I have enjoyed getting to work with you!

I am indebted to the entire staff of the University of South Carolina’s Counseling and Human Development Center. They believed I could recover from the loss of my dissertation, and gave me the time and space that I desperately needed to complete this. I am grateful for their support and count myself lucky to have them as colleagues and friends.

I owe a huge thank you to family and friends who have been with me throughout my time in graduate school and even before that. Close to my heart are my graduate cohort, the Bogart’s crew, the hoodrats, and my Saras. Thanks to my surrogate set of parents, Uncle Steve and Aunt Robyn. Extra special thanks to the woman who birthed me and instilled in me the values that I have today. Thanks Mom!

Most of all, I want to thank my husband, Michael Campana-Scherer. I love you more than there are quarks in the universe... and even more than Bowser is cute. I am looking forward to the extra honeymoons to come!
Table of Contents

Acknowledgments ............................................................................................................................ ii
List of Tables ...................................................................................................................................... vii
List of Figures .................................................................................................................................... viii
Abstract .......................................................................................................................................... ix
Self-Forgiveness Interventions for Women Experiencing a Breakup ........................................ 1
Review of the Literature .................................................................................................................... 3
  Method of the Review ...................................................................................................................... 3
  Review of the Theoretical Literature on Self-Forgiveness ........................................................... 4
  Review of the Empirical Literature on Self-Forgiveness ............................................................. 9
    Self-forgiveness as an Independent Construct ............................................................................. 9
    Self-forgiveness and Personality .................................................................................................. 12
      Negative aspects ...................................................................................................................... 12
      Positive aspects ..................................................................................................................... 18
    Self-forgiveness and Mental Health ............................................................................................ 19
      Negative affect ....................................................................................................................... 19
      Positive affect ....................................................................................................................... 25
  Critique of Literature and Implications for Theory ...................................................................... 26
  Implications for Research ............................................................................................................. 28
  Implications for Practice .............................................................................................................. 30
Research Agenda ............................................................................................................................. 32
Statement of Problem ...................................................................................................................... 34
  Attachment .................................................................................................................................. 34
  Forgiveness .................................................................................................................................. 39
  Breakups and Mental Health ......................................................................................................... 40
  Rationale for the Study ................................................................................................................. 41
  Hypothesis to be Tested ................................................................................................................. 43
    Statement of the Hypothesis ....................................................................................................... 43
Method ............................................................................................................................................ 45
  Participants .................................................................................................................................... 45
  Design .......................................................................................................................................... 47
    Independent Variables .............................................................................................................. 52
    Dependent Variables ............................................................................................................... 52
  Instruments .................................................................................................................................... 52
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Basic Demographic Information</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relationship-specific Information</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relationship information</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Romantic relationship quality</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emotional reaction to own transgression</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individual Information</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General affect</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interpersonal Style</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attachment</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dispositional forgivingness</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attitudes Toward Self</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forgiveness Towards Ex-Partner and Self</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feelings of Unforgiveness Towards Ex-Partner and Self</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Procedure</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research Hypothesis, Rational, and Analysis</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research Hypothesis 1</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Statement of the hypothesis</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rationale</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Analyses</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research Hypothesis 2</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Statement of the hypothesis</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rationale</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Analyses</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research Hypothesis 3</td>
<td>74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Statement of the hypothesis</td>
<td>74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rationale</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Analyses</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Results</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preliminary Data Analyses</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary Data Analyses</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research Hypothesis 1</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relationship variables</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individual variables</td>
<td>84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attitudes towards self</td>
<td>88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feelings of unforgiveness</td>
<td>88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feelings of forgiveness</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research Hypothesis 2</td>
<td>92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relationship variables</td>
<td>94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individual variables</td>
<td>94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attitudes towards self</td>
<td>97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feelings of unforgiveness</td>
<td>98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feelings of forgiveness</td>
<td>99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research Hypothesis 3</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relationship variables</td>
<td>101</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individual variables</td>
<td>105</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix O (Consent Form) ................................................................. 173
Appendix P (Self-forgiveness Intervention Participant Manual) ............ 176
Appendix Q (Debriefing Statement) .................................................... 212

Vita ......................................................................................................... 214
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Cronbach alphas for measurements at time 1 in the present research</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Descriptive statistics by time</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Brief list of all measures in the current study</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Descriptive statistics of dependent variables at T1, T2, and T3</td>
<td>79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Results for time 1 group means for four attachment styles, multivariate and univariate –F ratios for former relationship dependent variables</td>
<td>85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Results for time 1 group means for four attachment styles, multivariate and univariate –F ratios for individual emotional and social dependent variables</td>
<td>87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Results for time 1 group means for four attachment styles, multivariate and univariate –F ratios for attitudes toward self dependent variables</td>
<td>89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Results for time 1 group means for four attachment styles, multivariate and univariate –F ratios for feelings of unforgiveness dependent variables</td>
<td>91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Results for time 1 group means for four attachment styles, multivariate and univariate –F ratios for feelings of forgiveness dependent variables</td>
<td>93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Multivariate and univariate two-way interactions (condition [2] x time [3]) and applicable follow-up analyses for each dependent variable</td>
<td>102</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## List of Figures

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Figure</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. Four attachment styles as derived from working models of self and others
2. CONSORT Flowchart
3. Predicted scores for attachment types at T1
4. Predicted changes over time in positive attitudes toward self and forgiveness of self
5. Predicted changes over time in negative attitudes toward self, negative affect, and emotional response to own transgression
6. Predicted changes over time in forgiveness of ex-partner
7. Predicted changes over time in unforgiveness of self
8. Predicted changes over time in unforgiveness of ex-partner
9. Predicted scores for treatment conditions at T2
Abstract

SELF-FORGIVENESS INTERVENTIONS FOR WOMEN EXPERIENCING A BREAKUP

By Kathryn L. Campana, M.S.

A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy at Virginia Commonwealth University.

Virginia Commonwealth University, 2010.

Major Director: Everett L. Worthington, Jr., Ph.D.
Professor, Department of Psychology

This study examined the effectiveness of an intervention designed to increase self-forgiveness for women who have recently experienced a romantic relationship breakup. Of particular interest were the interactions between adult attachment style, treatment condition, and time. The current study examined how the following variables differ between attachment style groups and how they change over time with respect to treatment condition: aspects of the former relationship, emotional responses to personal transgressions within the relationship, general negative and positive affect, dispositional forgivingness, positive and negative attitudes toward self, feelings of unforgiveness toward self and ex-partner, and feelings of forgiveness of self and ex-partner. Data were collected over a period of four weeks from 74 undergraduate women who had experienced a breakup within the two months prior to beginning the study. Results found that there were some initial differences in dependent variables between attachment style categories, which were controlled for when examining interaction effects between attachment, treatment condition, and time. Results indicated that attachment did not affect participants’ responses to the self-forgiveness
intervention. However, there were significant interactions between treatment condition and
time. Results are discussed in terms of previous research. Limitations of the current study
are discussed and suggestions for future research are presented.
Self-Forgiveness Interventions for Women Experiencing a Breakup

Self-forgiveness is important in the context of adult attachment style because both concepts address how people react to themselves. People with positive models of self are likely to define themselves in positive terms (Hazan & Shaver, 1987), experience more positive than negative emotions (e.g., such as fear, anxiety, and shame; Feeney, 2005; Simpson, 1990). Self-forgiveness is related to measures of psychological well-being in addition to reflections of self and emotional experiences. Failure to forgive oneself is related to anxiety, depression, alcohol misuse, and neuroticism (Fisher & Exline, 2006; Maltby, Day, & Barber, 2004; Romero et al., 2006; Snyder & Heinze, 2005; Strelan, 2007b; Webb, Robinson, Brower, & Zucker, 2006).

Although as concepts they have a small positive relationship, forgiveness of others and self-forgiveness have major differences that reflect disparate underlying processes (Hall & Fincham, 2005). These different processes may be related to attachment style and models of self and others, so that a person may be high or low of either forgiveness of others or self-forgiveness. Thus, we might be able to glean a better understanding of self-forgiveness if we view it as a process of working models of self and others (Kachadourian, Fincham, & Davila, 2004).

Relational attachment style is the concept that defines how we relate to people with whom we have close relationships. It is omnipresent in our experience of these relationships. We develop our relational attachment styles as infants (Bowlby, 1969; Bowlby, 1979; Ainsworth & Ainsworth, 1958; Ainsworth, Blehar, Waters, & Wall, 1978; Ainsworth, 1989), and they extend throughout our lifetime (Hazan & Shaver, 1987).
In literature review the present dissertation manuscript, I review the extant theoretical and empirical literature on self-forgiveness. The literature review is meant to be a stand-alone review of the literature; it is not intended to lead to a discussion of the specific dissertation study that I am proposing. Instead, it is intended to be similar to a review article that might be found in a journal like *Psychological Bulletin*. The review is to establish an overview of the area in general. The sections following the literature review are meant to model the structure of a journal article presenting the findings of an empirical study. These sections will be similar to an article reporting an empirical study, in which each section represents a different part of the article. Therefore, later sections are self-contained, and literature review will not act as the introduction to my specific study but as a general review of the literature pertaining to self-forgiveness.
Review of the Literature

The focus of this research is to explore the effect of attachment style on the efficacy of an intervention aimed at increasing the self-forgiveness that women experiencing a breakup feel towards themselves. To do this, it is first necessary to review the pertinent literature on self-forgiveness. Although forgiveness and attachment may be important influences in how women experience relationships, a review of the empirical literature on these topics would be beyond the scope of this project. In order to keep the focus on the pertinent literature pertaining to the self-forgiveness intervention, which is the major focus of the present research, it was decided that a review of the theoretical and empirical literature on the topic of self-forgiveness would be conducted.

Method of the Review

Between the months of August, 2007, to October, 2007, I conducted searches for literature on PsycInfo using the phrases “forgiveness of self” and “self-forgiveness.” I found 36 journal articles and eliminated 18 them from inclusion in my review of the empirical literature based on (a) their relevance, (b) their theoretical and not empirical orientation, and (c) their availability (i.e., if no libraries within a 90 mile distance had the journals or books needed, the literature was not included). During these months I also reviewed book chapters on forgiveness of the self; these and the theoretical articles on self-forgiveness are included in the literature review in order to build a framework of theory to understand the empirical findings.
Review of the Theoretical Literature on Self-Forgiveness

Although not as popular as its relative forgiveness of others, self-forgiveness has received some attention in the theoretical literature in the past two decades. What started out as a clinical (Baker, 2007; Holmgren, 2002; Hulnick & Hulnick, 1989; Robb, 2007) and philosophical (Berlinger & Wu, 2005; Cavell, 2003; Dillon, 2001; Holmgren, 1998) topic of interest has just recently begun receiving the attention of scientists interested in fleshing out the theory of self-forgiveness in order to apply its concepts in a measurable way.

Hulnick and Hulnick, almost 20 years ago, defined self-forgiveness as having compassion for one’s self. They spoke about self unforgiveness as holding onto judgments we place on ourselves and outlined steps to take with clients who had a hard time forgiving themselves. They addressed the need for clients to “embrace themselves as worthwhile persons with both strengths and weaknesses” (Hulnick & Hulnick, 1989, p. 168). Their treatment of self-forgiveness is very brief, but their work serves as an introduction into talking about the need for self-forgiveness. In a much-cited philosophical consideration of self-forgiveness, Holmgren (1998) picks up where Hulnick and Hulnick (1989) left off. Her outline of what might be needed in order to achieve self-forgiveness begins with the idea the Hulnicks (1989) had- wrongdoers have to recognize their value as human beings before any other steps can be taken (1998). After this, an offender must (a) acknowledge and take responsibility for what she has done (an idea that will get treatment in the later empirical work), (b) recognize the victim’s status as a person, (c) allow herself to experience the negative feelings connected with the offense (i.e., guilt, remorse; another idea that will be addressed in the empirical literature), (d) “make a persistent… effort to identify and eliminate
the defects of character that led to… wrongdoing” (p. 78), and (e) attempt to make amends for the offense with the victim (Holmgren, 1998). In this process, Holmgren (1998) points to the importance of taking responsibility for one’s actions as playing a key role in reaching true self-forgiveness.

Several authors point to the dangers of self-forgiveness in their philosophical and clinical considerations. Dillon (2001), directly refuting Holmgren’s (1998) work states that above responsibility taking, self-respect is at the heart of self-forgiveness. She defines two different kinds of self-forgiveness: preservative and transformative. Dillon (2001) states that preservative self-forgiveness is characteristic of acceptance of one’s self and core feelings of self-worth and decency. She juxtaposes this with transformative self-forgiveness, which, she says, is needed if “one has violated core standards of one’s normative self-conception and called one’s worth and capacity for decency gravely into question” (p. 74). The outcome for transformational self-forgiveness should be self-respect. It seems that what Dillon is touching on here is the distinction that other authors will discuss between feelings of guilt and shame.

Cavell (2003) mentions shame and compares it with compassion, addressing them as emotions reflecting opposing views of the self. She cautions that psychoanalysts too often move their clients into what seems like a state of self-forgiveness by allowing clients to deny the harm they did. As in regular forgiveness, forgetting is not forgiving, and so the importance of taking responsibility for one’s actions is again stressed. Cavell (2003) advises that it is the psychoanalyst’s role to “facilitate the patient’s felt acknowledgement of what the patient has suffered and done, encouraging a larger perspective that allows the patient to be compassionate for herself” (p. 528).
In her later work, Holmgren (2002) clarified the steps for reaching self-forgiveness. Again, what she stressed is the claiming of responsibility. Other authors support this major step in other areas besides therapy; Berlinger and Wu (2005) discuss self-forgiveness and disclosing medical errors in the context of an offender taking responsibility for what happened (in this case, a medical error) and planning on taking steps to make sure that same mistake doesn’t happen again. Robb (2007) and Baker (2007) both discuss the specific clinical applications of self-forgiveness using rational-emotive behavior therapy (Robb, 2007) and substance use (Baker, 2007). These authors add to the canon of self-forgiveness literature by suggesting that the most important part of forgiving one’s self is claiming responsibility and feeling remorse for the hurt that one has caused others.

Worthington (2006) discusses the influence of self-condemnation on the ability to forgive one’s self; he differentiates between guilt-prone self-forgivers and shame-prone self-condemners. When working with the former, he suggests that these people, who feel guilt due to a behavior or act, need to accept the self as a transgressor and try to make amends, which are the first steps toward self-forgiveness. Eventually this means integrating this new information about the self into a revised self-concept. Shame-prone self-condemners, however, have a harder road to travel, as they first need to work on their sense of self. They cannot forgive themselves for the kinds of people they are, no matter what they would do to compensate for any misdeeds they did. Overall, the authors that address self-forgiveness philosophically and clinically seem to be laying the groundwork for empirical investigations by suggesting necessary components of genuine self-forgiveness—responsibility, remorse, and repentance.
The theory of self-forgiveness has recently been discussed from a scientific perspective. Like Worthington (2006), Tangney, Boone, and Dearing (2005) also make the distinction between the moral emotions of shame and guilt as they relate to self-forgiveness. They explain that people who are prone to feelings of guilt would find it easier to forgive themselves, as guilt focuses on a specific behavior and often motivates change in order to alleviate the discomfort of the emotion. Shame, however, as it focuses on the self, does not motivate positive changes, but often can lead people to respond defensively, which can lead to pseudo self-forgiveness through denial, rationalization, or externalizing blame (Tangney et al., 2005). These authors conclude that people who have a tendency to forgive themselves would probably be “self-centered, insensitive, narcissistic individuals, who come up short in the moral emotional domain, showing lower levels of shame, guilt, and empathic responsiveness” (Tangney et al., 2005, p. 150).

It seems, then, that the theoretical literature on self-forgiveness has mixed predictions about what real self-forgiveness would look like. Tangney at al. (2005) seem to combine the ideas of self-forgiveness and pseudo self-forgiveness into a conclusion that the tendency towards self-forgiveness is indicative of self-centered narcissism. Other theorists conclude that people who are narcissistic would be more likely to forgive themselves, but this would not be genuine self-forgiveness because the offenders would not have experienced the guilt and remorse necessary to own responsibility and therefore forgive one’s self (Cavell, 2003; Holmgren, 1998; Holmgren, 2002; Worthington, 2006).

In a recent review of the literature focusing on self-forgiveness, Hall and Fincham (2005) compare self-forgiveness and forgiveness of others and propose their own model of self-forgiveness based on this literature. They point out that while forgiveness involves the
behaviors or someone else (the transgressor), when one is focusing forgiving the self, offenses are not limited to what people did. Thoughts, desires, and feelings can also be transgressions (Hall & Fincham, 2005). This might be one reason that self-forgiveness is harder to reach; more possible offenses lead to a greater gap between where one is now and the ideal self. Additionally, the victim harmed by the self could be another person or it could be the self. Again, it might be much harder for people to forgive themselves if they are both the victim and the offender. Baker (2007) speaks to this in her work with females in substance abuse recovery. It is often the case that these women transgress against themselves and others with their substance abuse. Hall and Fincham (2005) point out that while empathy facilitates forgiveness of others, empathic feelings inhibit forgiveness of self. This points to Tangney and colleagues’ idea of the more self-forgiving person as being self-involved and narcissistic, lacking empathy for their victims.

Another point that Hall and Fincham (2005) make in their review of the differences between forgiveness of others and forgiveness of self is the consequences. Harboring feelings of unforgiveness towards others has “moderate” (p. 625) consequences, they claim, whereas feelings of self-unforgiveness can have “extreme” (p. 625) consequences. Some of these consequences will be discussed in the section reviewing the empirical literature. Hall and Fincham go on to discuss their conceptual model of self-forgiveness. Hall and Fincham’s (2005) model involves emotional determinants (i.e., guilt, shame), social-cognitive determinants (i.e., attributions), and offense-related determinants (i.e., conciliatory behavior, perceived forgiveness from victim or higher power, severity of offense) in the path to self-forgiveness. The authors admit that their model’s limitations includes exclusion of other
factors that may play a role in self-forgiveness, and so they urge other researchers to conduct empirical studies in order to further ideas of self-forgiveness.

These authors present similar ideas about self-forgiveness. Common themes running through these conceptualizations of self-forgiveness involve facets that either inhibit or facilitate the process of self-forgiveness. Facilitating factors include claiming responsibility and the experience of similar moral emotions (e.g., guilt, remorse, and repentance) that motivate positive change. These facilitating factors focus the transgressor on the transgression itself, whereas the inhibiting factors to genuine self-forgiveness (e.g., shame, self-condemnation, narcissism) involve a focus on the self in a general, global and persistent sense. Researchers can test their assumptions using these conceptualizations about what self-forgiveness is what influences the process.

**Review of the Empirical Literature on Self-Forgiveness**

There are several different topic areas in my review of the 18 empirical articles that are included in an examination of self-forgiveness. However, when looking at the themes of these articles a more compact framework can be teased out. The major areas of this literature on self-forgiveness examines personality and mental health. There are a few articles that seemed to fall within a clinical implications framework; these will be addressed later towards the end of this section. All articles covered in the current review are summarized for ease of use Table Appendix-1, found in Appendix A.

**Self-Forgiveness as an Independent Construct**

Although forgiveness has been a popular topic of empirical investigation in recent years, self-forgiveness received scant attention (Mauger et al., 1992). Only recently has the topic of self-forgiveness started receiving the ample scholarly attention needed to know more
about it as a separate construct; most of the empirical research on self-forgiveness has been published within the past five years. The first task in this exploration of self-forgiveness as a construct independent of forgiveness of others was create ways to measure it. In his 1992 study, Mauger and his colleagues created the Forgiveness Scale, a 30-item scale with two separate and distinct subscales -- Forgiveness of Others (FO) and Forgiveness of Self (FS). Their theory on differences in types of forgiveness rested upon an assumption that people have different motivations for forgiving themselves and others. He described forgiveness of self as having an intropunitive orientation, so that failure to achieve self-forgiveness was meant to be punishing to one’s own self. Conversely, forgiving others has an extrapunative orientation, so that not forgiving another person is meant to punish them.

Macaskill, Maltby and Day (2002) used Mauger et al.’s (1992) concept of these two separate constructs of forgiveness in their exploration of empathy. The authors had 324 British undergraduates fill out Mauger et al.’s (1992) Forgiveness Scale and Mehrabian and Epstein’s (1972) empathy measure. The authors used independent group t-tests in this correlational study. The study, although seeming relatively simple in terms of design and hypotheses, was one of the first to support this idea of self-forgiveness being separate from forgiveness of others. They found that people with higher levels of empathy could more easily forgive others, but had difficulties forgiving themselves. This difference was key- what seems like a simple finding ignited research into self-forgiveness, as it showed that there are different motivations behind forgiving others and forgiving yourself. After this, several authors furthered this two-construct theory with factor analysis.

Maltby, Day and Barber (2004) used factor analysis in their correlational study looking at their sample of 320 British adults (non-students picked out of the telephone book).
Participants in this study completed the Enright Forgiveness Scale (Suboviak et al., 1995), which measures six dimensions of forgiveness related to a specific situation; the Forgiveness Likelihood Scale (Rye et al., 2001); Rye et al.’s Forgiveness Scale (2001) measuring responses to hypothetical situations, the self and others subscales of the Heartland Forgiveness Scale (Yamhure-Thompson & Snyder, 2003); the Abbreviated Form of the Revised Eysenck Personality Questionnaire; the COPE checklist (Carver et al., 1989; Ferguson, 2001; Johnston, Wright, & Weinman, 1995) which assesses coping methods using 15 subscales; the Life Satisfaction Scale (Diener, Emmons, Larson, & Griffin, 1985); the General Health Questionnaire; the Perceived Stress Scale (Cohen, Kamarck, & Mermelstein, 1983); and both the negative and positive affect subscales of the Positive and Negative Affect Schedule (PANAS; Watson, Clark, & Tellegen, 1988). The authors found that forgiveness of self loaded only on Neuroticism.

Ross, Hertenstien, and Wrobel (2007) used 162 undergraduates in their correlational study. Participants in this study filled out the Heartland Forgiveness Scale (Thompson, Snyder, Hoffman, Michael, Rasmussen, Billings, et al., 2005), Mauger et al’s (1992) Forgiveness Scale, Rye et al.’s (2001) Forgiveness Likelihood Scale and Forgiveness Scale, Transgression Narrative Test of Forgiveness (Berry et al., 2001), and the Schedule for Nonadaptive and Adaptive Personality (SNAP; Clark, 1993), which measures various trait that are relevant to descriptions of personality disorders according to the latest version of the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM-IV-TR, American Psychiatric Association, 2000). Ross et al. (2007) found that self-forgiveness has a negative correlation with personality disorders in the Anxious Cluster (Avoidant, Dependent, and Obsessive-Compulsive), as well as with the Paranoid, Schizotypal, Borderline, and Narcissistic
personality disorders. Using principal components factor analysis, they found that the forgiveness of others and self-forgiveness scales loaded as expected, providing support for the idea that these are two largely independent factors.

Thompson and her colleagues (2005) conducted six studies using samples of 55-1111 undergraduates in order to validate a dispositional forgiveness measure they created. The first two studies only used their Heartland Forgiveness Scale to create three subscales – forgiveness of others, self, and situations. As expected, there were three separate and independent factors.

These authors studied whether forgiveness of others and self-forgiveness are different. The constructs of forgiveness of others and self-forgiveness were repeatedly found to load onto different factors (Maltby, Day, & Barber, 2004; Ross et al., 2007; Thompson et al., 2005). In addition to providing support for the existence of two separate factors in forgiveness, other authors have used regression analyses to make predictions about the relationships between self-forgiveness and personality (Leach & Lark, 2004; Ross et al., 2007; Strelan, 2007a, 2007b) and between self-forgiveness and mental health (Day & Maltby, 2005; Snyder & Heinze, 2005;). The contributions of these authors are discussed below.

These studies are illustrative of the way researchers were beginning to view the differences between forgiveness of others and forgiveness of self. Instead of assuming that forgiveness of others and self-forgiveness have similar processes, these authors were supporting the idea that self-forgiveness differs from forgiveness of others in palpable ways.

**Self-Forgiveness and Personality**
Negative aspects. Several authors explored how personality is related to one’s tendency to forgive their own transgressions. From the outset, we observe that the bulk of the studies are correlational and involve questionnaires. Rarely any measurement of behavior is undertaken. Thus, we do not really know how forgiveness of self might change and how the relationship of forgiveness of self to personality might change. Furthermore, there is much shared method variance in detecting the relationship of self-forgiveness to personality constructs.

Leach and Lark (2004) developed a correlational study and gave measures of personality, forgiveness, and spirituality to 137 undergraduates. These students, of whom 90% were classified as religious, filled out the Bipolar Adjective Scale (McCrae & Costa, 1985, 1987), an 80-item measure assessing the personality attributes within the five-factor theory of personality—neuroticism, extraversion, openness, agreeableness, and conscientiousness. Along with this measure, participants completed Mauger’s Forgiveness scale (1992), the Spiritual Transcendence Scale (STS; Piedmont, 1999), and the Spiritual Well-Being Scale (SWB; Ellison, 1983; Paloutzian & Ellison, 1982). The authors found negative correlations between self-forgiveness and neuroticism. When this relationship was further explored using hierarchical regression analyses, it was found the neuroticism acts as a predictor for self-forgiveness, so that people who score high on personality measures of neuroticism are less likely to forgive themselves for their transgressions.

Maltby, Macaskill and Day (2001) studied forgiveness in 324 undergraduates using a correlational study. Using the Forgiveness Scale (Mauger et al., 1992), the Abbreviated Form of the Revised Eysenck Personality Questionnaire (Eysenck & Eysenck, 1975; Francis, Brown, & Philipchalk, 1992) measuring extraversion, neuroticism and psychoticism, and the
Health Questionnaire (Goldberg & Williams, 1991) which measures depression, anxiety, social dysfunction, and somatic symptoms, they conducted Pearson correlational analyses and found that failure to forgive the self has a positive correlation with neuroticism. This work was extended by Maltby, Day and Barber (2004) in their sample of 320 British adults, described above. In their principal components factor analysis of the forgiveness items, Maltby et al. (2004) found that forgiveness of self loaded exclusively on the neurotic coping factor. People who are lower in self-forgiveness are more likely to use denial, as well as behavioral and mental disengagement in their dealing with problems.

Ross, Kendall, Matters, Wrobel, and Rye (2004) found similar results in their correlational study examining self-forgiveness and personality. Their participants, 147 undergraduates, filled out the Heartland Forgiveness Scale, Rye et al.’s (2001) Forgiveness Scale and Forgiveness Likelihood Scale, the Transgression Narrative Test of Forgiveness (Berry, Worthington, Parrott, O’Connor, & Wade, 2001), and the revised NEO Personality Inventory (NEO-PI-R; Costa & McCrae, 1992a). Using principal components analysis, they found that self-forgiveness is positively correlated with extraversion and negatively correlated with neuroticism. Multiple regression analyses revealed that depression and impulsiveness predict low self-forgiveness, whereas positive emotion, competence and order act as positive predictors of self-forgiveness.

Strelan (2007b) and Fisher and Exline (2006) examined personality as it relates to *faux self-forgiveness* in his correlational study. Strelan (2007b) gave a battery of personality, forgiveness, and self-focused measures to 176 undergraduates at a large Australian university. Participants filled out the Heartland Forgiveness Scale, the Narcissism Personality Inventory (Raskin & Terry, 1988), Bachman and O’Malley’s (1977) adaptation of
Rosenberg’s (1965) Self-Esteem Scale, the Revised Harder Personal Feelings Questionnaire (Harder & Zalma, 1990) measuring guilt and shame, and the Agreeableness subscale of the NEO Five Factor Inventory (Costa & McCrae, 1992b). Strelan (2007b) found that both self-esteem and guilt acts as mediators between narcissism and self-forgiveness, so that those people who have high self-regard and/or a low sense of guilt (his description of a narcissistic person) may report more self-forgiveness. Strelan makes the conclusion that narcissists’ claims that they have forgiven themselves for their transgressions may not reflect genuine forgiveness, which would include some regret and admitting some responsibility for their actions in the transgression.

Fisher and Exline (2006) examined the difference between excusing and self-forgiveness using multiple regression analyses in their correlational study. Their sample of 138 undergraduates filled out measures that used transgression-specific measures (remorse and self-condemnation, responsibility, efforts to reduce negative emotions, repentant behaviors, and humbling change), situational context measures (seriousness and hurtfulness of the offense), individual differences measures (well-being and egotism), and several measures of dispositional self-forgiveness. To conserve space, I will refrain from listing all the measures that they used and instead refer the reader to the article. Their main finding related to dis-ingenuine self-forgiveness (what I will refer to as self-fauxgiveness) is that egotism, a mixture of entitlement and narcissism, is related to reluctance to accept responsibility. Participants who scored high on egotism and reported self-forgiveness tended to shift responsibility for the transgressions off of themselves.

Ross and his colleagues Hertenstien, and Wrobel (2007) extend the research on self-forgiveness and personality to include pathological personality patterns in their study of 162
undergraduates. Their methods, described above, used a series of multiple regression and hierarchical multiple regression analyses. Ross et al. (2007) found that Borderline and Avoidant were negative predictors of self-forgiveness. The authors conclude that neuroticism seems to play a large role in the failure to forgive one’s self, which they say is supportive of the idea that self-forgiveness has an introjective orientation (Mauger et al., 1992).

A few studies looked at the relationship between religiousness or spirituality and self-forgiveness. Walker and Gorsuch (2002), using a correlational design, gave their sample of 180 undergraduates from religious and nonreligious universities several measures of personality and forgiveness. These measures included Goldberg’s (1999) personality scale, which can be scored to assess the Big 5 personality traits as well as the 16 factor model of personality (Cattell, Saunders, & Stice, 1949); researcher-created items looking at forgiveness of others, forgiveness of self, and receiving forgiveness that are based on the forgiveness measures that McCullough, Worthington, and Rachal (1997) describe; and researcher-created items asking about God’s forgiveness. Using a series of hierarchical multiple regression analyses, the authors found a positive correlation between religion and forgiveness of others. However, there was a negative correlational relationship between forgiveness of self and religion. Walker and Gorsuch (2002) concluded that religious people may not feel it is their place to forgive themselves, but rather that is something that God does.

Webb, Robinson, Brower, and Zucher (2006) support this separation of forgiveness by God and self-forgiveness in their correlational study looking at 157 adults with alcohol use disorders entering a community-based substance abuse treatment center. These participants completed a number of measures, including three forgiveness items from the
Brief Multidimensional Measure of Religiousness/Spirituality (BMMRS; Fetzer Institute, 1999), a subscale assessing meanings, values, and beliefs from the BMMRS; the Loving and Controlling God scales (Benson & Spilka, 1973) to assess perceptions of God; the Daily Spiritual Experiences Scale (Underwood & Teresi, 2002); two subscales from the Religious Background and Behaviors Questionnaire (Conners, Tonigan, & Miller, 1996) measuring religious beliefs and practices within the previous year and over the lifetime; items from the BMMRS and the Brief RCOPE (Pargament, Smith, Koenig, & Perez, 1998) to measure positive and negative religious coping; the Purpose in Life Scale (PIL; Crumbaugh & Maholick, 1964); the Short Index of Problems (PIL; Miller, Tonigan, & Longabaugh, 1995; Feinn, Tennen, & Kranzler, 2003) to measure alcohol problems; and the Timeline Follow-Back interview (Sobell, Brown, Leo, & Sobell, 1996; Sobell & Sobell, 1992) to measure alcohol use (quantity and frequency) from the previous 90 days. Using a series of paired sample t-tests, bivariate correlations, and hierarchical logistical regression analyses, Webb et al. (2006) found that there were consistent and significant differences in reports of forgiveness by God, forgiveness of others, and self-forgiveness (both at baseline measurements and six-month follow-up measurements), with self-forgiveness remaining significantly lower than both other types of forgiveness. Again, perhaps this difference exists because people with religious beliefs may feel that God forgives those who ask for it, but they are unable to forgive themselves for their actions.

Although this research reviewed in the present section is a good starting point from which we can understand more about how personality is related to self-forgiveness, there are several criticisms worth noting. These studies rely heavily on self-report measures, and so there is really no way to tell if people actually have forgiven themselves. There exists a
possibility that participants, caving to social desirability pressures, would report self-forgiveness when it has not yet happened. Also, because of the cross-sectional nature of this research, we cannot tell how self-forgiveness changes over time. The theoretical literature points to the process of self-forgiveness and what is hypothesized to be necessary in changing. Thus far, the empirical literature falls short in examining this process.

**Positive aspects.** In one study described above, Leach and Lark (2004) found that there are positive relationships between self-forgiveness and openness, agreeableness, and conscientiousness. Regression analyses revealed that openness predicts forgiveness of the self. There was no relationship found between forgiveness of the self and spirituality, although spirituality predicted forgiveness of others. Ross et al. (2004) found that self-forgiveness has a positive correlation with the extraversion factor of personality, so that people who exhibit personality traits of warmth, gregariousness, and positive emotions are more likely to forgive themselves for their offenses against others.

Several personality aspects are related to accepting responsibility for one’s actions. Fisher and Exline (2006) found that remorse is related to a willingness to humble oneself and repent for their offense. Fisher and Exline (2006) also found relationships between Prosocial behaviors and taking responsibility for transgressions. They conclude that genuine self-forgiveness involves claiming responsibility for one’s own transgressions.

Walker and Gorsuch (2002) found in their study of personality that there were positive correlations between forgiveness of self and friendliness, assertiveness, and intellect. The authors’ examination of personality also included characterological emotional traits. They found that self-forgiveness is negatively correlated with anxiety, and positively correlated with emotionality and emotional stability. This research leads one to conclude that
in addition to there being relationships between self-forgiveness and personality, self-forgiveness is also related in some ways to emotions, and thus, related to mental health.

This research reviewed in the present section focused on the positive personality aspects associated with self-forgiveness. The authors’ findings seem to point towards the positive relationships between desirable personality traits (e.g., openness, friendliness, etc) and a tendency to forgive the self. These studies suffer from the same weaknesses as the previously discussed research. Although this present research speaks to cross-sectional self-reports, we do not have a clear idea of what positive personality traits would look like as they relate to self-forgiveness over time. Additionally, this research leaves us with no idea of the relationship between desirable personality traits and self-forgiveness for a specific event.

Self Forgiveness and Mental Health

Of the research that had been done on self-forgiveness, mental health outcomes seem the most compelling because although research focusing on personality allows us to understand forgiveness patterns more, understanding more about mental health implies that some kind of interventions can be done in order to improve mental health. Whereas personality is fixed, psychological well-being is a dynamic construct. Although there have been no experimental empirical studies whose aim is to change or benefit mental health related to self-forgiveness, the research that does exist paints a vivid picture of how self-forgiveness is related to emotional and psychological well-being, what I will refer to as mental health.

Negative affect. Ross and his colleagues (2004), described above, studied emotional stability as a factor of personality. Their findings, that self-forgiveness is negatively related to negative affect, led them to conclude that people who lack emotional stability have
difficulty forgiving themselves. Romero and her colleagues (2006) examined mood disturbance in 81 adult women receiving follow-up medical care for breast cancer at a medical oncology breast clinic in a county general hospital. Participants completed Mauger et al.’s (1992) Forgiveness of Self subscale, the short version of the Profile of Mood States (POMS; Shacham, 1983) measuring psychological distress, and the general version of the Functional Assessment of Chronic Illness Therapy (FACIT; Cella, 1997), which measured quality of life. The authors, using a correlational design but utilizing multiple regression analyses to test meditational models, found that having a self-forgiving attitude negatively correlated with mood disturbance, and in addition, acted as a unique predictor in regression analyses. Self-forgiving attitudes were correlated with and acted as a predictor for, quality of life. From this, the authors conclude that self-forgiveness significantly predicts psychological adjustment.

Studies of more specific mental health variables have found relationships between self-forgiveness and other kinds of emotional experiences. Day and Maltby (2005) looked at loneliness in a sample of 176 university students in their correlational study. These students completed the Heartland Forgiveness Scale (Thompson et al., 2005) and the revised UCLA Loneliness Scale (Russell, Peplau, & Cutrona, 1980). Multiple regression analysis revealed a negative correlation between forgiveness of self and social loneliness in addition to the role that self-forgiveness plays as a predictor for social loneliness scores. The authors offered explanations for this, saying that perhaps people who cannot forgive themselves withdraw from social situations because they feel they are unworthy of forgiveness, or perhaps people who are lonely might feel that they have fewer social relationships, which then causes them
to assign more important to their own transgressions because they are unable to forgive themselves (Day & Maltby, 2005).

Several authors have examined anger as it pertains to self-forgiveness. Barber, Maltby, and Macaskill (2005) designed a correlational study to examine the anger and self-forgiveness of 200 undergraduates who filled out the self and other subscales of the Heartland Forgiveness Scale (Thompson et al., 2005), and the Anger Rumination Scale (Sukhodolsky, Golub, & Cromwell, 2001) which measures the tendency to think about current anger-provoking situations and recall angry episodes from the past. The authors found a negative relationship between self-forgiveness and angry after-thoughts, thoughts of revenge, and angry memories. When multiple regression analyses were done, angry memories came out as a predictor of self-forgiveness. The authors conclude that in order to reach self-forgiveness, participants would have to deal with angry memories. Thompson and her colleagues (2005) examined psychological well-being in one of the several studies they used to obtain validation and estimated reliability data for the measure they created, the Heartland Forgiveness Scale. This scale, which contains subscale for Forgiveness of Others, Forgiveness of Self, and Forgiveness of Situations, was given to 504 undergraduates to complete, along with the Trait Anger Scale (Spielberger, Jacobs, Russell, & Crane, 1983), the State-Trait Anxiety Inventory (Spielberger, Gorschuch, & Lushene, 1970), the Center for Epidemiological Studies Depression Scale (Radloff, 1977), and the Satisfaction with Life Scale (Diener, Emmons, Larsen, & Griffin, 1985). Using a series of hierarchical regression analyses, the authors found that self-forgiveness has a negative correlation with anger, although it did not act as a significant predictor in regression analyses. Thompson and her colleagues (2005) also explored how other emotions, such as anxiety and depression, were
related to self-forgiveness in this same study. Self-forgiveness also had a negative correlation with anxiety and depression, and in addition forgiveness of self is a significant predictor of anxiety and depression.

Anxiety and depression are often found to be correlated with self-forgiveness in a negative direction. Maltby and his colleagues (2004) looked at affect in a study described above. They found an indirect relationship between self-forgiveness and anxiety and depression. As mentioned above, they found that self-forgiveness loads primarily on a neurotic coping factor. This factor, in turn, is correlated with negative affect such as depression and anxiety. The authors conclude that people who are not forgiving can be described as anxious and moody (Maltby et al., 2004).

Snyder and Heinze (2005) extended this research on self-forgiveness and anxiety through their work on Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), an anxiety disorder. Interested in how adult survivors of childhood abuse would present symptoms of PTSD as a factor of forgiveness of self, their abuser, and the abuse situation, they designed a correlational study and gave their battery of measures to 79 undergraduates who indicated that they had been physically and/or sexually abused as a child younger than 17 years. The participants completed the Heartland Forgiveness Scale (Thompson et al., 2005), the Hostile Automatic Thoughts Scale (HAT; Snyder, Crowson, Houston, Kurylo, & Poirier, 1997) measuring hostility, and the Revised Civilian Mississippi Scale for PTSD (MISS; Norris & Perilla, 1996). The authors found that self-forgiveness negatively correlated with hostile thoughts and PTSD symptoms. Self-forgivingness was tested as a mediator with regression analyses, and was found to have a strong meditational role in the relationship between PTSD and hostility in male and female survivors of physical and sexual childhood abuse. The
authors concluded that forgiveness of self has a major dampening effect in the PTSD-hostility relationship, so that people who have more self-forgiveness are less likely to experience hostility as a result of their PTSD (Snyder & Heinze, 2005).

In addition to anxiety, people who have greater difficulty forgiving themselves are more likely to experience negative affect in the forms of guilt and shame (Webb et al., 2006). Ingersoll-Dayton and Krause (2005) studied the importance of religious faith and self-forgiveness using qualitative methods is 129 Christians above the age of 65 years. Their interview, consisting of three questions (e.g., Do you forgive yourself for the things that you have done? If not, why? How does religion help you forgive yourself?) pulled responses that coders organized into cognitive, behavioral, and emotional reactions. These data were organized into a data matrix of self-forgiveness. Due to the other psychological well-being variable measured by other studies, I was particularly interested in the emotional responses of people as they related to self-forgiveness. People who reported having forgiven themselves reported relief and well-being, whereas those people who said they had not forgiven themselves for actions they had done in the past reported chronic guilt, self-criticism, and other mental health problems (Ingersoll-Dayton & Krause, 2005). The authors concluded that older people are at particular risk for mental health problems if they have troubles forgiving themselves.

In the only true experimental study I found in the literature, Zechmeister and Romero (2002) randomly assigned participants to one of four narrative pairings so that each participant wrote a narrative describing an incident where they were the offender or victim of an offense that was either forgiven or not forgiven (pairings were offender forgives/does not forgive; victim forgives/does not forgive; offender forgives/victim forgives; offender does
not forgive/victim does not forgive). Additionally, the participants filled out the Interpersonal Reactivity Index (IRI; Davis, 1983), a measure of empathy. Participants’ responses were coded for the presence or absence of offense severity, blameworthiness, self-threat, time frame, consequences, intentions, affective responses, empathy, and forgiveness.

Chi-square analysis (2x2x2) examined differences in narratives a function of victim vs. offender role, forgiven vs. not forgiven events, and the presence or absences of coded features. Zechmeister and Romero (2002) found several noteworthy findings related to self-forgiveness. Offenders who did forgive themselves reported more regret, self-blame, and guilt. Conversely, offenders who forgave themselves implicated the victim in sharing the blame for the offense. Offenders who forgave themselves were more likely to mention making an apology and making amends. Additionally, offenders who did not forgive themselves demonstrated more emotional concern for their victims, as well as more personal distress as a result of thinking about their victims. As a result of these findings, Zechmeister and Romero (2002) concluded that empathy for a victim may make self-forgiveness more difficult. They also concluded that shame and feelings of distress about oneself act as obstacles to self-forgiveness. Their findings about shame echo several theoretical examinations of self-forgiveness (Dillon, 2001; Tangney et al., 2005) as well as theoretical considerations of self-fauxgiveness and responsibility (Holmgren, 1998 & 2002; Tangney et al., 2005), which starts to paint a picture of self-forgiveness as a complicated and multifaceted process.

Even though Zechmeister and Romero (2002) conducted an experiment, in contrast to the remaining bulk of the literature, their experiment involved manipulations of
questionnaires and written output. Behavior was not measured, nor were any physiological indicators. Shared method variance again is a problem in interpreting the findings.

Strelan (2007b), in a study described above, found that forgiveness of self has a negative correlational relationship with guilt and shame; when these variables were used in regression analyses, guilt appeared as a unique predictor of self-forgiveness so that people who experience more guilt are likely to condemn themselves which acts as a barrier to self-forgiveness (Strelan, 2007b). This study also examined the role of guilt and self-esteem as mediators between narcissism and self-forgiveness. It was found that narcissists (defined as having high positive self-regard and/or low guilt) are more likely to report having forgiven themselves for their transgressions. This is related to Fisher and Exline’s (2006) work that distinguishes between genuine self-forgiveness and excusing one’s behaviors. Their construct of egotism and its relation to refusing to take responsibility for one’s own transgressions is similar to Strelan’s (2007b) construct of narcissism and their reluctance to take responsibility. Strelan (2007b) summarizes his research by concluding that people who experience a combination of anxiety, remorse and regret in response to their transgressions are more likely to punish themselves, which according to Fisher and Exline (2006) prevents self-forgiveness. The paradox lays, however, in the related finding that people who feel little guilt or remorse for their transgressions are likely to report faux self-forgiveness but not really experience genuine forgiveness (Fisher & Exline, 2006; Strelan, 2007b) and implicate their victims in sharing the blame by not taking full responsibility for their actions (Zechmeister & Romero, 2002).

**Positive affect.** Maltby and his colleagues (2004), in their examination of coping styles, found that, indirectly, self-forgiveness is related to positive affect and life satisfaction.
The relationship between self-forgiveness and neurotic coping is negative; in turn, this is related to positive affect and life satisfaction so that people who report infrequently using neurotic coping strategies report higher positive affect and satisfaction with life. This positive relationship is found directly by Thompson and her colleges (2005), who reported a positive correlation between self-forgiveness and satisfaction with life.

Strelan’s (2007a) work on self-esteem and self-forgiveness adds to our understanding of the relationship between self-forgiveness and positive affect. Strelan’s (2007a) sample of 275 undergraduates at a large Australian university completed a packet of questionnaires including the Just World Scale (Rubin & Peplau, 1975) measuring general belief in a just world and unjust world beliefs; the Personal Belief in a Just World scale (Dalbert, 1999); the forgiveness of self and others subscales of the Heartland Forgiveness Scale (Thompson et al., 2005); The Gratitude Questionnaire-6 (GQ-6; McCullough, Emmons, and Tsang, 2002); and the Bachman and O’Malley (1977) adaptation of Rosenberg’s (1965) Self-Esteem Scale. Strelan (2007a) found that forgiveness of self was positively correlated with self-esteem, as well as general and personal belief in a just world.

**Critique of Literature and Implications for Theory**

The findings of the empirical studies generally seem to support the more general points of the theoretical literature. Holmgren (2002, 1998) and Worthington (2006) both speak to the importance of feeling remorse and claiming responsibility in taking those first steps towards genuine self-forgiveness, which is supported by some of the researchers discussed above (Ingersoll-Dayton & Krause, 2005). Studies on personality also support this, as they relate self-fauxgiveness to narcissism and self-centeredness (Fisher & Exline, 2006; Leach & Lark, 2004; Maltby et al., 2004; Ross et al., 2007). What is missing from these
studies, however, is a measure that can easily distinguish between genuine self-forgiveness and self-fauxgiveness, as the way of distinguishing them at this point is to correlate the reports of self-forgiveness with low empathy, low responsibility, and low guilt and shame. Both theory and empirical studies support this idea that people who too readily forgive themselves (i.e., those who are not willing to take responsibility and just let themselves “off the hook”), although this connection could stand to be more parsimonious in empirical studies.

Related to this is the idea that one must experience guilt as a motivating force towards self-forgiveness. The studies support this idea (Fisher & Exline, 2006), as they do with the idea that shame, a moral emotion that is much more self-focused, acts as an impediment to genuine self-forgiveness. Dillon’s (2001) ideas about preservative versus transformative self-forgiveness outlines the prescribed forgiveness for guilt (preservative) and shame (transformative), stressing that shame, which is more a chronic bad reflection of self, needs a stronger self-forgiveness.

The theories underlying our understanding of self-forgiveness speak to the process of change. Currently, however, empirical literature has not addressed this process. Studies are needed that are informed with this part of theoretical self-forgiveness and support the necessary conditions for change that several authors posit (e.g., claiming responsibility, making amends; Holmgren, 2002, 1998; Worthington, 2006).

Additionally, how our understanding of the theoretical self-forgiveness is informed by empirical literature is constrained. Because most of these studies use similar methodology (i.e., cross-sectional design, correlational statistical analyses, self-report measures), these findings could be due, in part or in whole, to shared method variance. This runs the scientific
risk of merely supporting previous research, which does not add anything to our understanding. The similar methods that these studies use do not challenge our theory of self-forgiveness. This is needed in order to further our knowledge about the process of self-forgiveness. Hall and Fincham’s (2005) model of self-forgiveness outlines plausible paths leading to self-forgiveness. Unfortunately, their model has yet to be tested in the empirical literature.

Other theoretical constructs that may relate to self-forgiveness that have not yet been tested include attachment. Adult attachment styles seem to be an obvious choice in which to test our ideas about self-forgiveness, as the models of self and others that make up our attachment styles could lend themselves easily to examination. For example, preoccupied attachment styles, with their negative feelings about themselves, low self-esteem, and higher regard for others than for themselves, seem to have a similar profile as those people who seem to have a difficult time forgiving themselves. Attachment styles and self-forgiveness should be tested in order to contribute to our theoretical understandings of self-forgiveness.

**Implications for Research**

The study of self-forgiveness is a newly evolving field, and as such there are many areas which could be strengthened. All but five of the empirical studies review above use undergraduate university students as their participants. While some of the studies reviewed have specific clinical populations in mind, such as older adults (Ingersoll-Dayton & Krause, 2005), breast cancer survivors (Romero et al., 2006), survivors of childhood sexual and/or physical abuse (Snyder & Heinze, 2005), and adults with alcohol use disorders (Webb et al., 2006), the rest seem to be samples of convenience. Thus, the generalizability of their findings, especially for clinical populations not covered by these studies, are non-existent.
Mauger and his colleagues (1992) studied a clinical population, although these findings are hardly generalizable due to their weak methodological and statistical procedures. Basic correlational analyses were run using measures that had not been established to have psychometric adequacy, so the findings of Mauger et al. are applicable to clinical populations as a whole only with great caution. The literature largely seems to overlook populations that may have special need for self-forgiveness, such as perpetrators of abuse, people who misuse or are addicted to substances that are less socially acceptable than alcohol (e.g., injectable drugs), those whose careers might involve violence or hurting of other people or law enforcement (i.e., military veterans, correctional officers, police officers), or people involved in painful relationship events (i.e., divorce or breakups, preventable loss of a partner or child). The average age of participants in these studies is also narrow. As most of the studies used undergraduates, their findings may be limited to experiences of young adults.

Another critique of the literature is the lack of experimental and longitudinal designs. Although there seem to be some strong correlational and findings, the directionality of these findings can only be surmised because of the cross-sectional design of the studies. Experimental designs would greatly contribute to our knowledge of self-forgiveness, as researchers could then manipulate variables ad control for other variables. The experimental study included in the extant literature (Zechmeister & Romero, 2002) uses only one validated measure, and then relies on coders to code written samples.

A manipulation stronger than writing might add to our understanding of the dynamics of self-forgiveness. This manipulation could include empirically supported or evidence-based interventions or workshops. Additionally, Zechmeister and Romero (2002) rely on their participants to choose which of their own personal memories to write about when they ask
the participants to write about transgressions. Perhaps including only participants that have experienced the same kind of transgression and to the same severity (e.g., people who have all experienced the sudden and unexpected death of a loved one) would give a clearer picture of the specific self-forgiveness needs and experiences of those people.

Thus far in the literature, the Heartland Forgiveness Scale (Thompson et al., 2005) and Mauger et al.’s (1992) Forgiveness of Self scales are the most widely used. Mauger et al.’s (1992) study presents weak psychometric information based on flimsy methods, whereas Thompson and colleagues (2005) report strong psychometric data. Both of these measures, however, only address dispositional or trait forgivingness of self. There is a lack of validated state measures of self-forgiveness, so this is a blind spot in the literature. We really do not have a good idea of how people’s forgiveness of self might change over time, or how they forgive themselves in response to certain events.

**Implications for Practice**

As discussed above, there seems to be myriad support for the link between self-forgiveness and mental health. To the best of my knowledge, however, there have been no empirical studies examining interventions to increase self-forgiveness. This is a dearth in the literature that warrants attention. The empirical literature thus far suggests that those people who are able to forgive themselves have better psychological adjustment outcomes, even in reaction to traumatic life events (Snyder & Heinze, 2005). This literature seems to be leading the way to the invention of interventions to benefit people through self-forgiveness. A few of the studies reviewed here suggest clinical implications that might be important to keep in mind.
Ross and his colleagues (2007) pointed out the link between personality disorders and self-forgiveness, especially focusing on the strong negative relationship between self-forgiveness and Borderline personality disorder or traits. Snyder and Heinze (2005), in their exploration of childhood abuse, suggest that, because society believes that abusers should be held responsible for abuse, there is no expectation that victims have to forgive their abusers. Because of this, attempts to help victims of childhood abuse forgive their abusers may be misguided because “it may be more plausible and important for the person to forgive him/herself… rather than the parental perpetrator(s) of the abuse” (p. 427). What Snyder and Heinze seem to be suggesting here is that clinicians and researchers should be concentrating their efforts on creating interventions that promote self-forgiveness. The findings of Webb and his colleagues (2006), although with a different population (alcohol abusers versus victims of childhood abuse), seem to imply the same message. Their findings illustrate the importance that self-forgiveness might have in substance abuse recovery: low self-forgiveness predicts alcohol problems, but there is a positive correlational relationship between self-forgiveness and (a) feeling a purpose in life, and (b) days abstinent from alcohol. The authors conclude that self-forgiveness is the most elusive kind of forgiveness, as people find it very hard to forgive their own transgressions. These studies, combined to the research discussed above that found a positive predictive relationship between self-forgiveness and mental health point out the possible importance of developing self-forgiveness interventions.

Many of the empirical studies reviewed above support the idea that not forgiving the self is detrimental to psychological well-being. This is a fact that clinicians may have known anecdotally for some time, but these data lend credibility to the notion for forgiving oneself.
Worthington (2006) and Holmgren (2002, 1998) give excellent suggestions for helping clients to experience self-forgiveness. Their first step is to claim responsibility for one’s actions, which is supported by the research. Although these seem to be good steps, they lack the empirical support that would perhaps give them weight as the “gold standard” of self-forgiveness.

**Research Agenda**

Based on the critique of the findings and their implications discussed above, I suggest a research agenda to test propositions that are suggested.

1. Self-forgiveness differs in student and non-student populations. Test these differences.
2. Self-forgiveness differs in people who have committed more serious transgressions and those who have committed less serious transgressions. Research should separate the two to make distinction.
3. Relationship between self-forgiveness and other variable can be better understood with statistical analyses that explore models and causality. Research should use more complex statistical analyses than what are currently being used.
4. There seems to be confusion between genuine self-forgiveness and fake self-forgiveness. Measures need to be developed that are more sensitive to this difference.
5. Empathy seems to be detrimental to genuine self-forgiveness. This relationship should be further explored.
6. Self-forgiveness should be examined within ongoing relationships in response to relationship transgressions.
7. There is a lack of experimental studies. More non-correlational designs should be utilized in research.

8. Self-forgiveness might differ in response to different events. This should be examined in context of specific events.

9. Self-forgiveness probably changes over time. This process needs to be examined in order to facilitate it.

10. Intervention studies need to be conducted so we understand more about what works in self-forgiveness.

This review of the literature on self-forgiveness points to the necessity of research utilizing strong methodology that addresses the weaknesses in the present literature research-sampling (i.e., including non-student samples and people experiencing events that they would feel a need to grant themselves forgiveness), treatment (i.e., manipulate experimental and control groups to assess the influence of treatment), and valid measures of self-forgiveness related to a specific event (i.e., state self-forgiveness). Taking into consideration the mental health problems that exist along with the inability to forgive oneself, it seems imperative that researchers stretch themselves beyond cross-sectional correlational research. Responsible science calls for us to develop intervention studies that inform and are informed by theory in order to help as many people as we can while at the same time adding to the canon of literature on self-forgiveness and mental health.
Statement of the Problem

Over the last quarter of a century, research on forgiving has become frequent (for a compendium of reviews, see Worthington, 2005) and has gained even more prominence with the ascendancy of positive psychology (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000). However, only in the most recent few years has self-forgiveness become a serious focus of empirical study (Hall & Fincham, 2005). Attachment to primary caregivers in childhood has a lingering influence on how we view other people and ourselves as adults; for example, people perceive their parents as warm and responsive tend to report more positive feelings towards themselves and others, whereas those who reported that their parents were inconsistent or unresponsive had a more negative self-image and negative views of other people (Hazan & Shaver, 1987). Attachment can be theorized as consisting of feelings (positive or negative) toward ourselves and other people (Bartholomew & Horowitz, 1991). Because both attachment (Bartholomew & Horowitz, 1991; Griffin & Bartholomew, 1994) and forgiveness of self reflect the positive or negative ways in which people view themselves (Fisher & Exline, 2006; Leach & Lark, 2004; Strelan, 2007a, 2007b; Zechmeister & Romero, 2002), attachment might be expected to influence the degree to which people might forgive themselves.

Attachment

The patterns of bonds that we form with relationship partners, our attachment style, is a relatively stable trait and shapes how we view relationships and experiences ourselves and others in them. These attachment styles begin from an early age as we learn what to expect in relationships with caregivers. These attachment styles carry over into our adult lives as we
develop romantic relationships with others. Our attachment styles will influence the
attributions that we make in relationships and what we expect relationships to be.

Griffin and Bartholomew (1994) outlined four adult attachment styles based on two
dimensions: working model of self and working model of others in relationships (see Figure
1). Secure adult attachment styles are characterized by positive working models of both the
self and others. People with secure adult attachment think of themselves and others
affirmatively; they are comfortable with interpersonal closeness and have an internalized
sense of self worth (Griffin & Bartholomew, 1994). They would be likely to behave in ways
that strengthen relationships. Preoccupied adult attachment styles are characterized by
positive models of others but negative model of self. People with preoccupied adult
attachment styles have an omnipresent sense of low self-worth, and rely on relationship
partners to validate their worth through fulfillment of excessive intimacy needs. They are
prone to feel anxious and depressed when these needs are inevitably unfulfilled by often
overwhelmed relationship partners. Conversely, dismissive attachment styles are
characterized by negative models of others but positive models of self. People with this
pattern have negative expectations of others, and avoid closeness with others because of this.
Their high sense of self-worth stresses independence and downplays the value of closeness
with others. Dismissive and preoccupied attachments can be conceptualized as opposite each
other. Fearful attachments styles are negative in both their models of self and others, and are
conceptualized as opposite of secure individuals. People with fearful attachments have
negative expectations of other people and have a low sense of self-worth, which makes them
dependent on the others they don’t trust to validate their sense of worth. They frequently
avoid close relationships and intimacy with others to protect themselves. This prevents
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model of Other (Avoidance)</th>
<th>Positive</th>
<th>Negative</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Model of Self (Anxiety)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Positive</td>
<td>Secure Attachment Style</td>
<td>Dismissing Attachment Style</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative</td>
<td>Preoccupied Attachment Style</td>
<td>Fearful Attachment Style</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Figure 1.* Four attachment styles as derived from working models of self and other (Bartholomew & Horowitz, 1991).
rejection by others and the resulting decrease in self worth they would experience by the loss of a partner.

These attachment styles are conceptualized to fall upon the two dimensions of working models of self and others. Whereas some theorists assume that attachment styles, once formed, do not change substantially throughout the life (Bartholomew & Horowitz, 1991; Bowlby, 1982; Collins, 1996; Hazan & Shaver, 1987; Scharfe & Bartholomew, 1994), other theorists argue that later relationships can modify these early attachment styles (Cassidy, 2000; Ruvolo, Fabin, & Ruvolo, 2001) by changing the way people view themselves and others. Other researchers have connected attachment to labile self-esteem, which they say can change based on external experiences (Foster, Kernis, & Goldman, 2007). While Foster and his colleagues (2007) found that stable self-esteem is related to secure attachment styles, unstable self-esteem or fragile high-self-esteem, is related to preoccupied and fearful attachment styles. Thus, while attachment styles might not change, people with negative models of self can present with various levels of self-esteem based on external events (Foster et al., 2007).

Furthermore, how one copes with relational events, such as the loss of a relationship (Sbarra & Emery, 2005), is related to attachment style (Mikulincer & Shaver, 2005). People in recently dissolved relationships report more negative affect in general, but low attachment security is specifically related to increased experiences of anger and sadness (ref). People with higher attachment security are able to make smoother emotional transitions after a relationship break up; they experience less anger and sadness, and more relief than do their low attachment security counterparts (Sbarra & Emery, 2005). People who have insecure
attachments (low models of self and/or others) react to divorce with distress and negative coping strategies (Birnbaum, Orr, Mikulincer, & Florian, 1997). As experiencing the end of a relationship is a stressful life event, people with secure attachment styles would probably react to in an expected way, with distress and negative coping strategies as well.

Different models of self and others would yield differential predictions about how people perceive transgressions in relationships (Feeney, 2005). Some transgressions, like betrayal in relationships, are seen as especially hurtful if they are related to both models of self and others. Betrayal specifically could be seen as the transgressor’s disregard for a partner’s needs (affecting the victim’s model of self) and a turning away from the relationship (affecting the victim’s model of other). Examples of transgressions that might be experienced in relationships, especially in those relationships resulting in breakups, might be acts of abandonment, or accumulations of various smaller harms. People who are high in avoidance (i.e., negative model of other; Bartholomew & Horowitz, 1991; Griffin & Bartholomew, 1994), such as Dismissive or Fearful participants, report lower levels of hurt, distress, and fear in reaction to relationship transgressions (Feeney, 2005). Conversely, people who feel higher levels of anxiety (i.e., negative model of self; Bartholomew & Horowitz, 1991; Griffin & Bartholomew, 1994), such as Preoccupied or Fearful participants, report higher levels of hurt, fear, distress, and shame (Feeney, 2005). Models of self and other might also differentially predict how people would deal with the transgressions by making attributions (Collins, 1996). People who have an impaired model of self might be likely to perceive the ending of a relationship as a betrayal or as abandonment, which is a threat to their sense of self (Birnbaum et al., 1997), whereas people with poor working
models of others might perceive the ending of a relationship as a result of others’ (i.e., their partners’) wrongdoings or character flaws.

Different models of self and others will also yield differential predictions about whether people forgive or don’t forgive transgressions within relationships. Among married couples, those people with secure attachments are more likely to forgive (Kachadourian et al., 2004). Both husbands and wives were more likely to forgive if they had positive models of self and others. This could be because they make benign attributions for partner behavior (Kachadourian et al., 2004). These partners could also be more empathic (Kachadourian et al., 2004), which would explain the tendency to forgive, as well. Although little research has been done on forgiveness of the self (for a review and theoretical approach, see Fincham, Hall, & Beach, 2005; Tangney et al., 2005), attachment styles could also differentially predict this tendency in relationships. People with negative models of self (i.e., Preoccupied or Fearful participants) might be unlikely to forgive themselves for transgressions that they commit, whereas people with positive models of self (i.e., Secure or Dismissive participants) would find it relatively easy to forgive themselves upon experiencing the feelings of unforgiveness.

**Forgiveness**

An individual experience of forgiveness involves two separate but often related experiences—*emotional forgiveness*, the replacement of negative unforgiving emotions with positive other-oriented emotions, and *decisional forgiveness*, the decision to control one’s future behavior (Exline, Worthington, Hill, & McCullough, 2003; Worthington & Scherer, 2004; Worthington & Wade, 1999). Forgiving is one way to rectify feelings of emotional unforgiveness, like resentment, bitterness, hate, fear, anger, and other negative emotions.
Unforgiveness can also be decreased through pursuing justice, re-narrating the transgression, letting go, seeking restitution, resolving the conflict, projecting blame, forbearing (accepting) the transgression, and suppressing feelings (Worthington, 2001).

The process of forgiveness changes motivations towards a transgressor. Whereas a person feeling unforgiveness might want to seek revenge for a transgression, or avoid that person, experiencing forgiveness will decrease these motivations (Fincham et al., 2005; McCullough, Fincham, & Tsang, 2003). Additionally, forgiveness can increase positive motivations, such as reconciliation with a transgressor (Kearns & Fincham, 2004; McCullough & Worthington, 1994; Worthington & DiBlasio, 1990). The process of self-forgiveness is more complex, and we know less about it (Hall & Fincham, 2005). For example, while reconciliation is not necessary for interpersonal forgiveness, there is no way not to reconcile with yourself when forgiving yourself (Baker, 2007).

**Breakups and Mental Health**

Psychological adjustment following the termination of a romantic relationship is especially important to attend to. It is expected that there will be some degree of psychological distress following a breakup, which might be related to attachment (Sbarra & Emery, 2005) which might be related to attachment; (Kachadourian et al., 2005). A stronger positive attachment (i.e., positive working models of others) predicts a loss of sense of self after the end of a romantic relationship (Ainsworth, 1973). Negative emotions such as anger and anxiety (Berman, 1988a), depression and dysphoria (Davila, 2000), a sense of loss (Sweeper & Halford, 2006), loneliness (Berman, 1988b; Sweeper & Halford, 2006), and guilt (Fisher & Alberti, 2000) are normal reactions to the loss of a relationship. However, people who have better psychological functioning before the breakup, such as self-assurance and
higher self-esteem (and, perhaps more positive working models of self) seem to be better
adjusted following the breakup (Birnbaum, et al., 1997; Tschann, Johnston, & Wallerstein,
1989). This relationship is especially strong for women (Tschann et al., 1989). Additionally,
those people with secure attachment styles seem to adjust better after the end of a
relationship (Finzi, Cohen, & Ram, 2000).

While some of this research paints a grim picture of how people react to and adjust to
divorce and breakups, interventions have been shown to be helpful. After participating in
divorce support groups and divorce workshops, participants have shown improved
psychological well-being (Oygard, Thuen, & Solvang, 2000), better adjustment to the end of
the relationship (Quinney & Fouts, 2003), and decreased anxiety (Lee & Hett, 1990). Rye
and his colleagues (Rye, Folck, Heim, Olszewski, & Traina, 2004) have shown that people
who report having forgiven their ex-spouses following a divorce have better mental health
outcomes. We know very little about how effective interventions would be that are aimed at
increasing self-forgiveness among people experiencing relationship breakups. Because
women seem to experience very strong negative reactions to relationships ending, and people
differ in their adjustment and reactions to relationship breakups based on attachment style,
this is an area that is especially in need of investigation.

Rationale for the Present Study

The intervention was pilot-tested in a group of adult divorced women. Several
problems were experienced in this pilot testing that influenced how the intervention was run
for the current study. All of these problems affected recruitment of participants. For
example, recruiting women to the pilot study was difficult if they had any children. I was
unable to provide for childcare, and so potential participants had to find their own childcare
for a weekend morning and for most of the afternoon. The location where the intervention was conducted was a rural university with limited access to public transportation. As the pilot study was entirely a community-based sample, I advertised in offices and organizations whose mission included serving women (i.e., childcare centers, divorce lawyers, places of worship, YWCA). Another challenge faced in recruitment was the lack of interest in advertising the intervention on the part of several of these organizations serving women. Based on these problems, the intervention was adjusted and revised into a workbook so that participants completed the intervention online and on their own. The online nature of the intervention is helpful in accounting for the problems mentioned above.

By understanding how models of self and others work in attachment relationships, we can hope to understand models of self and other in tendencies to self-forgive. Different attachment styles have been shown to react differently in relationships; attachment styles (using working models of self and others) influence tendencies to forgive romantic partners. Although there is some empirical research that addresses self-forgiveness, there are no experimental studies that focus on interventions to promote self-forgiveness in women experiencing the end of a romantic relationship.

In order to correct for this, I developed a self-forgiveness intervention focusing on women experiencing breakups. I expect to find that attachment styles will be related to these women’s feelings about themselves (e.g., self-condemnation, self-esteem, etc) so that women with secure attachments will have more positive feelings towards themselves. An intervention whose aim is to increase feelings of self-forgiveness would increase positive feelings towards the self and decrease negative feelings towards the self. Because people
with secure and preoccupied attachment styles start out feeling differently towards themselves, this kind of intervention may affect them differently.

This intervention is based on theorizing by Hall and Fincham (2005), Worthington (2006), and Fisher and Exline (2006). Briefly, it assumes that self-forgiveness requires that a person confront self-condemnation. The person must then take steps to deal with spiritual components of the trigger events, seek to make restitution for wrongdoing on his or her own part, deal with shame and guilt, engage in a process of decisionally and emotionally forgiving the self, and address the beginning of self-acceptance. In general, the hypotheses to be tested relate adult attachment styles to participants’ responses to the intervention promoting self-forgiveness.

One unique aspect of this study is its online nature. As mentioned above, this online nature helps to account for problems in recruitment, as participants are able to access the description and the intervention from wherever they have computer access. No transportation is necessary, and participants can follow the intervention at their own pace. An additional unique aspect of the current study is its focus on self-forgiveness. There are no empirically-supported interventions for promoting self-forgiveness, and so this intervention is a distinctive contribution.

**Hypothesis to be Tested**

**Statement of the Hypothesis**

Participants will differ in scores on the dependent variables (i.e., relationship aspects, individual emotional and interpersonal style, attitudes towards self, forgiveness, and unforgiveness). At the data collection points, the immediate treatment and wait list control conditions will show differences in the DVs (interaction of time and condition). People of
different attachment styles will respond differently to the immediate treatment or waiting list conditions over time (S). There will be main effects of the condition as well as interaction effects due to treatment condition and attachment styles at different points in time. This is the main hypothesis of interest.

A secondary hypothesis of interest is that there will be an interaction between treatment condition and time (S), so that the intervention will have positive effects when it is delivered, disregarding attachment style. This would be a straightforward test of the efficacy of the intervention on increasing self-forgiveness.
Method

This section, which reports the method of the research, will be divided into four sections. First, the characteristics of the participants will be described. Second, I will describe procedures about how the data were collected. Third, the psychometric properties of each instrument will be described (for Cronbach’s alphas of instruments in the current study, see Table 1). Fourth, the analytic strategy for the data will be discussed.

Participants

Adult college student women who are experiencing or who have experienced a breakup within the last two months were recruited to participate. Recruitment took place at Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU). Students were recruited to participate in this study using the SONA research credit website, which contains the VCU Psychology Department pool of potential subjects from participating undergraduate psychology classes. A sample of 74 women was used, with 39 women in the immediate treatment group condition and 35 women in the wait-list treatment group condition. Criteria for participation included (1) being at least 18 years-old, (2) being female, (3) having recently (within two months) experienced the end of a romantic relationship, and (4) not being in a new relationship at the time of signing up for the study. Consent was obtained from all participants prior to any data collection. Students who met the above criteria and opted to participate were asked to fill out a survey three times. The participants had a mean age of 18.89 (SD = 1.47) years, and were of varying ethnicities, including Euro-American (n = 38), African-American (n = 18), Asian-American (n = 4), Latina (n = 3), South Asian/Indian American (n = 1), and “Other” (n = 10). Most of the participants identified their sexual
Table 1

*Cronbach Alphas for Measurements at Time 1 in the Present Research*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measure</th>
<th>Cronbach alphas</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Positive and Negative Affect Schedule (PANAS; n = 125)</td>
<td>.82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PANAS-Positive (n = 129)</td>
<td>.88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PANAS-Negative (n = 129)</td>
<td>.90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal Feelings Questionnaire Revised (PFQ2; n = 122)</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>PFQ2-Shame (n = 127)</td>
<td>.84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PFQ2-Guilt (n = 130)</td>
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<tr>
<td>State Anger Scale- Self (SASS; n = 131)</td>
<td>.97</td>
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<tr>
<td>Regret scale (R7; n = 129)</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>State Rosenberg Self Esteem scale (S-RSE; n = 123)</td>
<td>.89</td>
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<tr>
<td>Self Compassion Scale (SCS; n = 112)</td>
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<td>SCS-Self Judgment (n = 125)</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>SCS-Self Kindness (n = 121)</td>
<td>.86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transgression Related Interpersonal Motivations (TRIM; n = 125)</td>
<td>.93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TRIM-Revenge (n = 126)</td>
<td>.92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TRIM-Avoidance (n = 127)</td>
<td>.94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transgression Related Interpersonal Motivations – Self (TRIM-S; n = 127)</td>
<td>.93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TRIM-Revenge Self (n = 127)</td>
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<td>TRIM-Avoidance Self (n = 128)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Transgression Related Interpersonal Motivations – Conciliation (TRIM-C; n = 125)</td>
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<td>Trait Forgivingness Scale (TFS; n = 124)</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heartland Forgiveness Scale-Self (HFS-S; n = 126)</td>
<td>.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dyadic Adjustment Scale (DAS-7; n = 119)</td>
<td>.77</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
orientation as heterosexual \((n = 68)\), but the sample also included women who identified as lesbian \((n = 1)\), bisexual \((n = 3)\), and “Other” \((n = 1)\). Most of the ex-partners of participants were male \((n = 73)\), with only one ex-partner being female. Participant scores for measures at Time 1 were compared to see if there were any major differences between sexual orientation identification (i.e., identified as heterosexual versus bisexual, lesbian, or “other”) and gender of ex-partner (i.e., male or female gender). Sexual orientation groups—defined as heterosexual or non-heterosexual—revealed two significant differences on measures of self-forgiveness (as measured by the SIF-Self) and feelings of unforgiveness (as measured by the TRIM-R) and no significant differences on measures for participants who identified male versus female ex-partners. As these were the only differences, I concluded that sexual orientation and gender of ex-partner could be collapsed for analysis. Participants were asked to share about their previous relationship which had a mean length of 18.44 months \((SD = 17.09)\) with a mean time since the breakup occurred of 4.53 weeks \((SD = 2.34)\). See Table 2 for a breakdown of demographic information by attachment style. See Figure 2 for a CONSORT flowchart of participation.

**Design**

This study utilized a wait-list control condition intervention design. Participants completed the self-report questionnaires described below. Because time after completing the intervention is a factor, the design is also longitudinal, looking at data from the questionnaires of the participants over several weeks’ time. The statistical design involved an attachment style (Secure, Preoccupied, Dismissive, or Fearful) x condition (immediate treatment [IT] or waiting list [WL]) x time (S) [i.e., repeated measures (3 assessments)].
Table 2

*Descriptive Statistics by Time*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ATTACHMENT STYLE</th>
<th>Secure</th>
<th>Preoccupied</th>
<th>Dismissive</th>
<th>Fearful</th>
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<tr>
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<td>n = 17</td>
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<th>Waitlist treatment</th>
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<td>n = 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>n = 39</td>
<td>n = 35</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Age | 18.64 | 19.41 | 19.13 | 18.55 | 18.89 |
|     | (0.79) | (2.29) | (1.46) | (1.05) | (1.47) |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ethnicity</th>
<th>Euro-American/White</th>
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<th>Indian-American/South Asian</th>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<table>
<thead>
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<th>Gender of Ex-Partner</th>
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</table>

| Length of Relationship (months) | 20.59 | 17.32 | 24.23 | 17.33 | 18.44 |
|                                 | (15.66) | (13.09) | (26.19) | (13.09) | (17.09) |
Table 2

*Descriptive Statistics by Time, continued*

<table>
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<th>ATTACHMENT STYLE</th>
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<th>Dismissive</th>
<th>Fearful</th>
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Table 2

*Descriptive Statistics by Time, continued*

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<th>Dismissive</th>
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<td>Gender of Ex-Partner</td>
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<td>35.80 (11.43)</td>
<td>39.00 (10.26)</td>
<td>49.50 (7.53)</td>
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Note: Descriptive information notated as *Mean (standard deviation)*
Figure 2. CONSORT Flowchart. Criteria for inclusion included: female, age at least 18 years, eight weeks or less since breakup, currently single.
Thus, the design is a 4 x 2 x 3(S) design. An illustration using Campbell and Stanley (1966) notation is below.

Immediate Treatment: OX (2 weeks) O (2 weeks) O
Waiting List: O (2 weeks) OX (2 weeks) O

**Independent Variables**

Three independent variables (IVs) were used in this study. The first IV, a person variable, was the existing attachment styles that participants brought into the study (Secure, Preoccupied, Dismissive, or Fearful), measured by the Relationship Questionnaire described below. The second IV was treatment condition (immediate treatment or waiting list). The third IV was time, and is a within subjects variable; both the immediate treatment and the wait-list control conditions were measured three times.

**Dependent Variables**

Dependent variables were (1) relationship-specific variables (i.e., commitment, length of time together, etc), (2) participants’ emotional response to their own transgression, (3) general affect, (4) interpersonal style, (5) positive attitudes towards self, (6) negative attitudes towards self, (7) forgiveness of self, (8) forgiveness of ex-partner, (9) unforgiveness of self, and (10) unforgiveness of ex-partner.

**Instruments**

**Basic Demographic Information**

A basic demographic information questionnaire was used to gather information about the participants’ age, ethnicity, and sexual orientation. (See Appendix B.)
**Relationship-specific Information**

**Relationship information.** This measure inquired directly about the breakup (this was developed for the present research). The partner was identified by initials so the participants had a specific person in mind when answering questions. Questions included (1) ex-partner’s gender, (2) length of relationship, (3) commitment at time of breakup, (4) most commitment ever felt in relationship, (5) length of time since breakup, (6) current romantic relationship status, (7) and how the participant and her ex-partner each contributed to the end of the relationship (his and her transgressions). (See Appendix C.)

**Romantic relationship quality.** A short version of Spanier’s (1976) Dyadic Adjustment Scale (DAS), called the DAS-7 (Sharpley & Cross, 1982). The DAS is a 32-item, four subscale measure that assesses the quality of marital or romantic relationships. The DAS and its subscales have evidence supporting its content, criterion, and construct validity; coefficient alphas for the total score have been shown to be above .90 (Spanier, 1976). Seven items were taken from the original 32-item DAS: six items rated on a six-point Likert-type scale (with endpoints of either “always agree” and “always disagree” or “all the time” and “never”), which include three items assessing dyadic consensus (e.g., agreement on philosophy of life) and three items assessing dyadic cohesion (e.g., frequency of calmly discussing something); and one item assessing global dyadic satisfaction, which is rated on a seven-point scale (with endpoints of “extremely unhappy” and “perfectly happy”). Sharpley and Cross (1982) found that these seven items could accurately categorize the majority of marriages in their sample as either distressed or adjusted. Sharpley and Rogers (1984) found that the seven-item scale had a Cronbach’s alpha = .76, and inter-item correlations ranging
from .34 to .71. Evidence of criterion validity of the DAS-7 was its ability to discriminate between married, separated, and breakup participants. Additional studies have found that the DAS-7 has *alphas* ranging from .75 to .80 (Hunsley, Best, Lefebvre, & Vito, 2001). (See Appendix D.)

**Emotional reaction to own transgression.** This study used a modified version of the State Anger Scale (SAS; Spielberger, Jacobs, Russell, & Crane, 1983) that reflected feelings towards the self; this modified version for the present study is called the State Anger Scale-Self (SAS-S). State anger, conceptualized by Spielberger and his colleagues (1983) as “an emotional state or condition that consists of subjective feelings of tension, annoyance, irritation, fury, and rage… [which] can vary in intensity and fluctuate over time” (p. 169). The SAS instructs participants to read statements relating to feeling angry, such as “I am mad” or “I feel like hitting someone” and rate the intensity of their feelings in the moment on a scale from 1 = *Not at all* to 4 = *Very much so*. Alpha coefficients for different normed populations range from .88 to .95 (Spielberger et al., 1983). For the purpose of the present study, the instructions were modified to reflect anger at self in the moment. For example, the SAS instructions of “As you think about your ex-partner, please answer the following questions about the intensity of your feelings toward him/her right now.” were modified for the adapted version to read “Think about your actions (transgressions) that contributed to your break-up, which you have already described. As you think about your actions, please answer the following questions about the intensity of your feelings toward YOURSELF right now.” The SAS-S instructs participants to think about their own transgressions that led to the breakup. They were then instructed to rate their agreement with each item on the
same scale used by the SAS, from 1 = Not at all to 4 = Very much so. As this measure was created for this study, there is no psychometric data in the literature. (See Appendix E.)

Seven items were adapted from Exline, Deshea, and Holeman’s (2007) scale measuring regret. Exline and her colleagues created the scale to focus on regret for apologizing in relationships; for the present study, the seven items were reworded to reflect the actions (transgressions) that the participants took that contributed to their breakup (i.e., their part in the breakup), and their decisions about those actions. The directions instructed participants to rate the extent that they feel regret on an 11-point rating scale ranging from 0 = No regret to 10 = Extreme regret. Exline et al. (2007) found that these seven items on the regret scale had high estimated internal consistency reliability (Cronbach’s alpha .88). (See Appendix F.)

Individual Information

General affect. How participants normally feel was measured with the Positive Affect and Negative Affect Schedule (PANAS; Watson, Clark, & Tellegen, 1988). The PANAS (see Appendix G) consists of two ten-item subscales that measure two affective factors, positive affect (PA) and negative affect (NA). Participants used a five-point rating scale to rate how they generally feel each presented emotion; responses range from 1 = Very slightly or not at all to 5 = Extremely. The PANAS-PA scale has a Cronbach’s alpha of .88 and the PANAS-NA scale has a Cronbach’s alpha of .87 (Watson et al., 1988). Estimated temporal stability was also high for the scales; according to Watson and colleagues (1988), the estimated 8-week temporal stability for the PANAS-PA is .68, and for the PANA-NA is .71 (Watson et al., 1988). (See Appendix H.)
The revised Personal Feelings Questionnaire (PFQ2; Harder & Lewis, 1987) consists of two subscales that assess shame and guilt. Each subscale item is rated by participants on a five-point Likert scale ranging from 0 = *Never experience* to 4 = *Continuously or almost continuously experience*. The six-item Guilt scale (example item “Remorse”) and the ten-item Shame scale (example item “Feeling disgusting to others”) have estimated internal reliability using Cronbach’s *alpha* .72 for Guilt and .78 for Shame. The Guilt scale has evidence for construct validity, as reporting a positive correlation with measures of depression, self-derogation, and private self-consciousness (Harder & Zalma, 1990). (See Appendix H.)

**Interpersonal Style**

**Attachment.** Attachment was measured with the Relationship Questionnaire (RQ; Bartholomew & Horowitz, 1991). The RQ consists of four short paragraphs, each describing one of the four prototypical attachment patterns as they apply to close romantic relationships. Participants were asked to choose which description best describes themselves and check the corresponding space next to the descriptive paragraph. For example, the Fearful type reads as follows: “I am uncomfortable getting close to others. I want emotionally close relationships, but I find it difficult to trust others completely, or to depend on them. I worry that I will be hurt if I allow myself to become too close to others.” The RQ has moderate temporal stability over two months -- estimated stability for a Secure rating was .71; Fearful stability was .64; Preoccupied stability was .59; and Dismissive rating has a stability rating of .49 (Scharfe & Bartholomew, 1994). (See Appendix I.)

**Dispositional forgivingness.** The Trait Forgivingness Scale (TFS; Berry, Worthington, & O’Connor, 2005) consists of 10 items that assess a respondent’s self-appraisal of his or her
proneness to forgive interpersonal transgressions across situations and time, with items rated from 1 = *Strongly agree* to 5 = *Strongly disagree*. The scale includes such items as, “People close to me probably think I hold a grudge too long” and “I am a forgiving person.” This yields a potential range of scores from 10 to 50, with higher scores indicating higher trait forgivingness. The TFS shows evidence of construct validity, being strongly correlated with other measures of forgiveness (Berry et al., 2005). Berry et al. (2005) report a normative mean of 34.10 and standard deviation of 6.90 for the TFS in college students. The TFS had Cronbach’s *alpha* = .76 (Berry et al., 2005). (See Appendix J.)

**Attitudes Toward Self**

The present study used a modified version of the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (RSE; Rosenberg, 1965, 1979) that instructs participants to rate items of self-esteem based on how they feel in the present moment. The RSE is a ten-item scale that measures global self-esteem. Half of the items are worded positively (e.g., “I feel that I have a number of good qualities”), and the other half are worded negatively (e.g., “I feel I do not have much to be proud of”). Participants indicate whether they agree with the statements using a scale from 1 = *Strongly Disagree* to 4 = *Strongly Agree*. High total scores reflect higher global self-esteem. The RSE has a Cronbach’s *alpha* = .88 and estimated temporal stability of .82 over one week (Fleming & Courtney, 1984). Kernis (2005) describes his program of research examining what he terms *fragile self-esteem*. This *fragile self-esteem* is affected by both internal and external evaluative information, and therefore fluctuates. Kernis uses the RSE to measure stability of self-esteem, instructing research study participants to fill out the RSE based on current feelings. For the current study, the RSE was modified to instruct students to rate the presented statements based on current feelings. (See Appendix K.)
Self-compassion was measured with the Self-Compassion Scale (SCS; Neff, Hsieh, & Dejitterat, 2005). The SCS is a 26-item scale that measures self-compassion, which is regarded as being kind to oneself in instances of failure; it is being kind to oneself without having to protect one’s self-concept (Neff et al., 2005). The instructions direct participants to read each statement and indicate on a five-point rating scale how often they behave in the stated manner, from 1 = *Almost never* to 5 = *Almost Always*. The SCS has a Cronbach’s *alpha* = .92 (Neff, 2003). Of interest in the present study are the Self-Kindness and Self-Judgment subscales. Other subscales include Common Humanity, Mindfulness, Isolation, and Over-identification. The Self-Kindness subscale is a five-item scale with items like, “I try to be loving towards myself when I’m feeling emotional pain,” and “When I’m going through a very hard time, I give myself the caring and tenderness I need.” According to Neff (2003), the Cronbach’s *alpha* = .78. The Self-Judgment subscale includes five reverse scored items with statements like, “I’m disapproving and judgmental about my own flaws and inadequacies,” and “When times are really difficult, I tend to be tough on myself.” This subscale has a Cronbach’s *alpha* = .77 (Neff et al., 2005). (See Appendix L.)

**Forgiveness Towards Ex-Partner and Self**

The six-item TRIM-Conciliation subscale (TRIM-C; McCullough & Hoyt, 2002) was also administered to participants of the current study. The current study will use six items, omitting the item stating “I forgive him/her for what he/she did to me.” The TRIM-C has items such as “I tried to make amends,” and “I did my best to put aside the mistrust,” which are answered on a rating scale from 1 = *Strongly disagree* to 5 = *Strongly agree*. According to McCullough and Hoyt (2002), the seven-item version of the TRIM-C subscale had Cronbach’s *alpha* > .85. Additional studies on the TRIM-C subscale, using five of the
The original seven items, showed *alphas* ranging from .91 to .93, and temporal stability correlations ranging from .52 to .87 over one to nine weeks (McCullough et al., 2003). (See Appendix M.)

The Single-Item Forgiveness scales (SIF; Berry, Worthington, Parrott, O’Connor, & Wade, 2001) asked participants to select the number, ranging from 0 = *No forgiveness* to 4 = *Complete forgiveness*, that best represents the degree of forgiveness they currently feel. These single-item scales are used to determine *Forgiveness for the ex-partner*, as well as *Forgiveness toward the self for transgressions committed in the relationship*. (See Appendix M.)

The Heartland Forgiveness Scale (HFS; Thompson et al., 2005) is an 18-item measure with subscales measuring dispositional forgivingness of self, forgivingness of others, and forgivingness of situations. For the present study, only the first scale - forgiveness of self - was used. Each item is rated on a seven point rating scale ranging from 1 = *Almost always false of me* to 7 = *Almost always true of me*. Three items in each scale are reversed scored; higher scores indicate higher tendency to forgive the self, others, or situations. Temporal stability over three weeks was estimated at *r* = .72 for the Self subscale. Studies (Thompson et al., 2005) indicated that the Cronbach’s *alpha* > .72 for the Self subscale. (See Appendix M.)

**Feelings of Unforgiveness Towards Partner and Self**

The Transgression Related Interpersonal Motivations (TRIM; McCullough et al., 1998) Inventory subscales measure avoidance and revenge motivations with regard to a particular offense and offender. Participants completed the TRIM subscales with reference to the specified relationship hurt, called the index hurt. Early studies indicated that for the
seven-item Avoidance subscale (TRIM-A), the Cronbach’s alpha = .86. For the five-item Revenge subscale (TRIM-R), Cronbach’s alpha = .90 (McCullough et al., 1998). Items were rated on a five-point rating scale ranging from 1 = Strongly disagree to 5 = Strongly agree. TRIM scores correlate with scores on relational satisfaction, degree of apology, empathy for the transgressor, and (moderately) with single-item measures of forgiving. Three-week estimated temporal stability was $r = .79$ for TRIM-A and .86 for TRIM-R (McCullough et al., 1998). (See Appendix N.)

The TRIM was modified to reflect forgiveness towards the self (TRIM-S). The wording was changed so that the participants are indicating Retribution (e.g. “I want to get what I deserve”) or Avoidance (e.g., “I try not to think about what I did as much as possible”) motivations toward themselves. Items were rated on a five-point rating scale ranging from 1 = Strongly disagree to 5 = Strongly agree. Because the TRIM-S was created for the present study, there are no psychometric data from the literature. (See Appendix N.)

See Table 3 for a brief list of all measures in the current study.

**Procedure**

Participants were recruited to participate in this study using the SONA Systems website, which contains the VCU Psychology Department pool of potential subjects from participating undergraduate psychology classes. Participants utilized SONA Systems and accessed the following description of the study:

“Participants must be women at least 18 years of age, who have experienced a romantic relationship breakup within the previous two months, and are not currently in another romantic relationship. This study consists of participating in an at-home self-help intervention aimed at increasing self-forgiveness after a romantic relationship breakup. Self-help workbook will be completed and sent to study investigators over the course of two weeks. Study participation (including intervention) will last four weeks. In this study, you will be asked to complete a
series of surveys and questions about your former relationship, your emotional responses to the breakup, and your feelings toward yourself and your partner. You will be asked to fill out the surveys one to two times before participating in the self-forgiveness intervention, and two weeks afterwards. This packet of questionnaires takes about an hour to complete. You will receive 4 SONA research credits upon completion of the study.”

Table 3

**Brief List of All Measures in the Current Study**

- **Demographic information**
- **Relationship information**
- **Attachment**
  - Relationship Questionnaire (RQ)
- **General affect**
  - Positive Affect and Negative Affect Schedule (PANAS)
  - Guilt and shame
    - revised Personal Feelings Questionnaire (PFQ2)
- **Interpersonal style**
  - Trait Forgivingness Scale (TFS)
- **Emotional reactions to own part in breakup**
  - Anger at self
    - SAS-S: modified version of the State Anger Scale (SAS)
  - Regret
    - Regret items (R-7) (adapted from Exline, Deshea, and Holeman, 2007)
- **Attitudes towards self**
  - State (stability of) self-esteem
    - State Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (S-RSE; modified version of the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale)
  - Self-compassion
    - Self-Compassion Scale (SCS)
- **Forgiveness**
  - Transgression-Related Interpersonal Motivations Inventory (TRIM)
  - Transgression-Related Intrapersonal Motivations Towards the Self (TRIM-S)
  - TRIM-Conciliation subscale (TRIM-C)
  - Two versions of the Single Item Forgiveness scales (SIF) that focus on the self in one version and the ex-partner in another
  - Self subscale of the Heartland Forgiveness Scale (HFS)
- **Aspects of former relationship**
  - Relationship satisfaction
    - Short version of Dyadic Adjustment Scale (DAS-7)
In exchange for participation in this study, participants received research participation credits for their Psychology classes. Once participants signed up for the study through SONA Systems, I randomly assigned them to either the immediate treatment group or the wait-list treatment group, then emailed participants a web-link for the online survey. Participants were consented online (See Appendix O) immediately prior to administration of the initial participant questionnaire packet. The immediate treatment condition filled out the T1 questionnaire packet immediately after consenting to the study. As soon as this first questionnaire packet was completed, I sent participants in this group an electronic intervention workbook (see Appendix P). This workbook was adapted from Worthington’s (2005) REACH model.

The intervention workbook was divided into 15 sections, which were to be completed on the participants’ own pace but sent in to me in two parts over two weeks. The first part of the workbook, to be turned into the researcher within one week, covers nine sections. The first section introduced participants to the workbook and gave general instructions, including how to type answers within the electronic form. The second section asks participants to share why they signed up for the intervention, and why they feel it is important to forgive themselves. The third section teaches relaxation techniques to participants. The rationale of adding these kinds of exercises is to increase general anxiety coping skills as well as to prepare clients for the rest of the workbook. The fourth section asks participants to define several forgiveness-related concepts and then discuss what self-forgiveness means to them. The forgiveness-related concepts were then operationally defined in the workbook to give participants a point of reference for the rest of the intervention.
Section five asks participants to share details about their part in the breakup (i.e., their transgression). Section six asks participants to rate where they are on a scale of self-forgiveness, and then to explain why they chose that place as well as how their feelings, thoughts, and behaviors would be different at other spots on the scale. Section seven asks participants to create art about their current experience of self-forgiveness and where they would like to be. The rationale behind including a creative activity was not only to include a variety of activities in the intervention, but also to promote participants’ emotionally connecting with how their transgression affects them. Section eight asks participants to talk about the effects of self-condemnation, and what they have done to deal with these feelings. The rationale behind this activity is to have participants realize that self-forgiveness is only one way to deal with these feelings. The ninth section asks participants to identify what some of their core values are, and then to share how their transgression violated these values. Participants were instructed to complete and return this first half of the workbook to the investigator.

The second part of the workbook, completed during the following week, covers six sections (10-15). Section 10 asks participants to recall and describe their transgression in terms of who it affected and how. The next section asks participants to imagine speaking to two parts of themselves, one who deserves forgiveness and the other who does not. Participants are asked to come up with several reasons for both sides and then to describe what it was like for them to take these two opposing positions. Section 12 focuses on committing to self-forgiveness and first instructs participants that self-forgiveness is a process and not likely to happen all at once. Participants are asked to develop eight to ten strategies to deal with self-forgiveness when they feel less forgiving of themselves. Section
13 instructs participants how to hold on to that self-forgiveness they committed to in the previous section. The workbook asks participants to practice self-affirming statements and then to write a letter of self-forgiveness (using the template in the workbook) to themselves which they can use at later times when they feel less forgiving of themselves. Section 14 repeats the self-forgiveness assessment using the scale from the sixth section. In this assessment, participants are asked to share what spot in the scale they will commit to working towards, and what strategies they will use to get to that spot. The final section wraps up the intervention and asks participants to share what they learned from the intervention. The rationale including this activity is to assist intervention participants in synthesizing their experience and reminding them of the skills and information they learned.

When completed, participants were instructed to send the second half of the workbook to the investigator. Upon receiving the second half of the workbook, I sent the second questionnaire packet. Two weeks later, the participants were sent the third questionnaire packet. For the immediate treatment condition, there were a total of three data collection points. Participants were debriefed at the final data collection (see the Debriefing Form in Appendix Q). This form was sent to the participants via email.

The wait-list control condition filled out the T1 questionnaire packet immediately after consenting to the study. Two weeks later, I sent participants in this group an electronic version of the second questionnaire packet, as well as the intervention workbook. Participants were instructed to complete the first half of the electronic intervention packet and return the packet to the investigator. They were instructed to send the second half of the workbook to the investigator one week later. Two weeks after receiving the completed workbook, the participants were sent the third questionnaire packet. For the wait-list control
condition, there were a total of three data collection points. Participants were debriefed at the final data collection. This form was sent to the participants via email.

Reminder emails were sent to participants who had not sent back the packets within five business days of having been sent the packets via email. A total of four reminder emails were sent to the participants before they are considered to have been lost to follow up.

**Research Hypotheses, Rationale, and Analyses**

This statistical design involves attachment style (Secure, Preoccupied, Dismissive, or Fearful) x condition (immediate treatment or waiting list) x time (S). I will report the results uncovered within this three-way factorial design with repeated measures in three research hypotheses. In the first hypothesis, I report a main effect for attachment style at Time 1, which simply tests whether the people with four different attachment styles differed at Time 1. Second, I will report the results of the three-way interaction with repeated measures, which tells whether people with each of the four attachment styles responded differently over time to waiting list and immediate treatment conditions. Third, I collapse over attachment styles and report whether treatment conditions differed over time, which is the two way interaction between condition and time(S).

**Research Hypothesis 1**

**Statement of the hypothesis.** People respond to themselves and others differently based on attachment style. There will be a main effect of attachment style. At Time 1 people who have different attachment styles will differ in the dependent variables (i.e., feelings of forgiveness and unforgiveness towards themselves and their former partners, aspects of the former relationship, their emotional response to their own transgression, general affect, interpersonal style, and positive and negative attitudes towards themselves).
Rationale. Use of the four typologies of attachment (RQ; Bartholomew & Horowitz, 1991; Griffin & Bartholomew, 1994) was based on Bartholomew and colleagues’ models of self and others in attachment. Exline et al. (2003) and Kearns and Fincham (2004) report on different types of individual experiences of forgiveness and increased positive forgiveness motivations. Sbarra and Emery (2005) report on negative emotions following the end of a romantic relationship; this would replicate their findings. Attachment styles differ in tendencies to forgive (Kachadourian et al., 2004) and emotional distress (Feeney, 2005). Additionally, they differ in the tendency to experience positive and negative emotions towards themselves based on their working model of self (Brennan, Clark, & Shaver, 1998).

Analyses. Data were analyzed with a series of one-way (attachment style: Secure versus Preoccupied versus Dismissive versus Fearful) ANOVAs and MANOVAs. Participants’ attachment types as chosen on the RQ (in which people self-categorized into one of four discrete attachment styles) were used to compare group mean scores on the dependent variables. See Figure 3 for predicted scores at time 1 for attachment styles.

Research Hypothesis 2

Statement of the hypothesis. People of different attachment styles will respond differently to the immediate treatment or waiting list conditions over time (S). There will be main effects of the condition as well as interaction effects due to treatment condition and attachment styles at different points in time. In a three-way interaction between attachment style, treatment condition and time (S), participants will differ in their scores for the dependent variables (i.e., aspects of the former relationship, their emotional response to their own transgression, general affect, interpersonal style, positive and negative attitudes towards themselves, and feelings of unforgiveness and forgiveness towards themselves and their
former partners). See Figures 4-8 below for direction of predicted differences in the
treatment condition groups for dependent variable scores.

**Rationale.** Use of the four typologies of attachment (RQ; Bartholomew & Horowitz,
1991; Griffin & Bartholomew, 1994) was based on Bartholomew and colleagues’ models of
self and others in attachment. Exline et al. (2003) and Kearns and Fincham (2004) report on
different types of individual experiences of forgiveness and increased positive forgiveness
motivations. Sbarra and Emery (2005) report on negative emotions following the end of a
romantic relationship; this would replicate their findings. Attachment styles differ in
tendencies to forgive (Kachadourian et al., 2004) and emotional distress (Feeney, 2005).
Additionally, they will differ in the tendency to experience positive and negative emotions
towards themselves based on their working model of self (Brennan, Clark, & Shaver, 1998).

**Analyses.** Data were analyzed with a series of repeated measures (Time 1 versus
Time 2 versus Time 3) between- and within-subjects three-way (attachment style: Secure
versus Preoccupied versus Dismissive versus Fearful; treatment condition: Immediate
Treatment versus Waitlist Treatment x time (within subjects) analyses of covariance
(ANCOVAs) and multivariate analyses of covariance (MANCOVAs). ANCOVAs and
MANCOVAs were performed because initial scores on two dependent variable measures
(PFQ2-Guilt and TRIM-AS) were found to be different between attachment style groups. In
order to control for existing differences between groups before participation in the self-
forgiveness intervention, each participant’s scores on the PFQ2-Guilt and TRIM-AS were
used as covariates in these analyses.
Figure 3. Predicted scores for attachment types at time 1.
Figure 4. Predicted changes over time in positive attitudes towards self and forgiveness of self.
Figure 5. Predicted changes over time in negative attitudes towards self, negative affect, and emotional response to own transgression.
Figure 6. Predicted changes over time in forgiveness of ex-partner.
Figure 7. Predicted changes over time in unforgiveness of self.
Figure 8. Predicted changes over time in unforgiveness of ex-partner.
Participants’ attachment types as chosen on the RQ (in which people self-categorized into one of four discrete attachment styles) and their treatment condition (immediate treatment or waiting list) as randomly assigned were used to compare group means on the dependent variable(s) at Time 1, Time 2, and Time 3. If a significant three-way interaction was found, then post-hoc analyses were performed on each of the subjects in each attachment style. Namely, for the participants in each attachment style, a 2 [treatment condition (immediate treatment versus waiting list)] x 3 [time (S)] ANCOVA or MANCOVA was performed on each single or grouped set of dependent variables. If that two-way interaction was significant, then simple main effects were calculated as follows: at time 1, the immediate treatment and waiting list participants were not expected to differ; at time 2, the immediate treatment participants were expected to be more forgiving, or less unforgiving, of self; at time 3, the waiting list participants were hypothesized to become equally forgiving as were immediate treatment participants, resulting in no difference.

Research Hypothesis 3

Statement of the hypothesis. In this hypothesis, I proposed that the intervention had positive effects when it was delivered, disregarding attachment style. This is a straightforward test of the efficacy of the intervention on increasing self-forgiveness. People will respond differently to the intervention based on treatment condition without respect to attachment style. Participants will differ in their scores for the dependent variables (i.e., relationship aspects, individual emotional and interpersonal style, attitudes towards self, forgiveness, and unforgiveness). See Figure 9 for predicted direction of differences at Time 2 in the treatment condition groups for dependent variable scores.
Rationale. Use of the four typologies of attachment (RQ; Bartholomew & Horowitz, 1991; Griffin & Bartholomew, 1994) was based on Bartholomew and colleagues’ models of self and others in attachment. Exline et al. (2003) and Kearns and Fincham (2004) report on different types of individual experiences of forgiveness and increased positive forgiveness motivations. Sbarra and Emery (2005) report on negative emotions following the end of a romantic relationship; this would replicate their findings. Attachment styles differ in tendencies to forgive (Kachadourian et al., 2004) and emotional distress (Feeney, 2005).

Analyses. Data were analyzed with a series of two-way 2 [treatment condition (immediate treatment versus waiting list)] x 3 [time (S)] ANOVAs or MANOVAs with repeated measures on each single or grouped set of dependent variables. As these analyses collapsed attachment styles together, no variables needed to be controlled to account for group differences (i.e., no covariates were needed). If any of these two-way interactions
Figure 9. Predicted differences in dependent variables between treatment conditions at time 2.
were significant, then simple main effects were calculated as follows: at time 1, the immediate treatment and waiting list participants were not expected to differ; at time 2, the immediate treatment participants were expected to be more forgiving, or less unforgiving, of self; at time 3, the waiting list participants were hypothesized to become equally forgiving as were immediate treatment participants, resulting in no difference.
Results

Preliminary Data Analyses

I first examined the data for missing data and outliers. To account for missing data, cases were excluded pair-wise. Thus, I was able to retain as much data as possible for analysis. While there were a few outliers, they did not significantly skew the data and so were left in for analysis. The group means for dependent variables over the three measurement periods are grouped by attachment style in Table 4.

A series of independent-samples t-test was conducted to compare the dependent variable scores for participants who met inclusion criteria for analysis (i.e., female gender, age at least 18 years, affirmative consent given, breakup within previous two weeks, and not currently in a romantic relationship) with participants at Time 1 that did not meet criteria for inclusion. The groups differed significantly on one dependent variable. Participants who met inclusion criteria reported less self-compassion (SCS-Self Judgment Met $M = 14.56$, $SD = 4.72$ versus SCS-Self Judgment Not Met $M = 16.74$, $SD = 3.69$, $p < .01$). Most of the participants who were excluded ($n = 67$) did not meet the relationship criteria (i.e., not in romantic relationship and experiencing a breakup within the previous eight weeks; $n = 62$). Participants who did not meet inclusion criteria due to relationship criteria may experience less negative emotional experiences because they were more removed from the breakup experience through time and being in a new relationship. Participants who did not meet the inclusion criteria discussed above were removed from analysis for the present study.
Table 4

*Descriptive Statistics of Dependent Variables at T1, T2, and T3*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dependent Variables</th>
<th>Attachment Style</th>
<th>T-1</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
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<td>Secure</td>
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<td>Relationship length</td>
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<tr>
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<td>$M = 7.0$</td>
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<tr>
<td>Most commitment felt</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<td>$M = 8.65$</td>
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<td>(2.23)</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>$M = 36.29$</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>(7.20)</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
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<td>$n = 17$</td>
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<td>(4.5)</td>
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<td>$M = 12.47$</td>
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<td>(3.76)</td>
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### Table 4

**Descriptive Statistics of Dependent Variables at T1, T2, and T3**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measure</th>
<th>T1 n=22</th>
<th>T2 n=15</th>
<th>T2 n=15</th>
<th>T2 n=20</th>
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<tr>
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<td>(5.32)</td>
<td>(5.04)</td>
<td>(5.6)</td>
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<td>M=20.4</td>
<td>M=22.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(9.4)</td>
<td>(10.15)</td>
<td>(7.31)</td>
<td>(6.04)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transgression Related Interpersonal Motivations – Self Revenge subscale</td>
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<td>M=9.88</td>
<td>M=8.93</td>
<td>M=10.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
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<td>(5.03)</td>
<td>(4.28)</td>
<td>(4.21)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transgression Related Interpersonal Motivations – Self Avoidance subscale</td>
<td>M=13.0</td>
<td>M=13.94</td>
<td>M=13.33</td>
<td>M=18.85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(6.41)</td>
<td>(6.41)</td>
<td>(6.09)</td>
<td>(5.39)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transgression Related Interpersonal Motivations – Conciliation</td>
<td>M=20.29</td>
<td>M=22.0</td>
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<td>(4.96)</td>
<td>(6.56)</td>
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<td>Single Item Forgiveness – Former partner</td>
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<td>(1.22)</td>
<td>(1.24)</td>
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<td>(0.88)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Single Item Forgiveness – Self</td>
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<td>M=2.75</td>
<td>M=3.13</td>
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<td>(1.13)</td>
<td>(1.13)</td>
<td>(1.27)</td>
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<td>Trait Forgivingness Scale</td>
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<td>Dyadic Adjustment Scale</td>
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<td>Dismissive</td>
<td>Fearful</td>
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</tr>
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<td></td>
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<td>(5.83)</td>
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<td>Personal Feelings Questionnaire – Guilt subscale</td>
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<td>n=11</td>
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<td>M=10.14</td>
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<td></td>
<td>(3.78)</td>
<td>(7.49)</td>
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<td>(2.82)</td>
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<td>State Anger Scale-Self</td>
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<td>n=11</td>
<td>n=14</td>
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<td>(5.64)</td>
<td>(6.93)</td>
<td>(3.18)</td>
<td>(8.91)</td>
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</table>
Table 4

*Descriptive Statistics of Dependent Variables at T1, T2, and T3*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measure</th>
<th>T1</th>
<th>T2</th>
<th>T3</th>
<th>T4</th>
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<tr>
<td>State Rosenberg Self-Esteem</td>
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<td><strong>n = 7</strong></td>
<td><strong>n = 11</strong></td>
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<td>M = 33.46 (4.63)</td>
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<td>M = 32.64 (5.37)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Self-Compassion Scale – Self-Kindness subscale</td>
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<td><strong>n = 7</strong></td>
<td><strong>n = 10</strong></td>
<td><strong>n = 14</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-Compassion Scale – Judgment subscale</td>
<td><strong>n = 12</strong></td>
<td><strong>n = 7</strong></td>
<td><strong>n = 11</strong></td>
<td><strong>n = 14</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>M = 17.33 (3.11)</td>
<td>M = 12.0 (3.56)</td>
<td>M = 16.64 (5.56)</td>
<td>M = 12.79 (3.47)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transgression Related Interpersonal Motivations – Revenge subscale</td>
<td><strong>n = 12</strong></td>
<td><strong>n = 7</strong></td>
<td><strong>n = 11</strong></td>
<td><strong>n = 14</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Transgression Related Interpersonal Motivations – Avoidance subscale</td>
<td><strong>n = 13</strong></td>
<td><strong>n = 7</strong></td>
<td><strong>n = 11</strong></td>
<td><strong>n = 14</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>M = 18.62 (9.16)</td>
<td>M = 20.29 (10.77)</td>
<td>M = 20.09 (7.98)</td>
<td>M = 23.29 (8.2)</td>
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<td>Transgression Related Interpersonal Motivations – Self Revenge subscale</td>
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<td><strong>n = 7</strong></td>
<td><strong>n = 11</strong></td>
<td><strong>n = 14</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>M = 6.08 (1.68)</td>
<td>M = 10.86 (4.91)</td>
<td>M = 8.18 (3.74)</td>
<td>M = 8.86 (4.04)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Transgression Related Interpersonal Motivations – Self Avoidance subscale</td>
<td><strong>n = 13</strong></td>
<td><strong>n = 7</strong></td>
<td><strong>n = 11</strong></td>
<td><strong>n = 14</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>M = 11.39 (4.33)</td>
<td>M = 16.86 (9.39)</td>
<td>M = 12.73 (5.5)</td>
<td>M = 17.5 (5.87)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transgression Related Interpersonal Motivations – Conciliation</td>
<td><strong>n = 12</strong></td>
<td><strong>n = 7</strong></td>
<td><strong>n = 11</strong></td>
<td><strong>n = 12</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>M = 20.42 (6.93)</td>
<td>M = 23.0 (6.32)</td>
<td>M = 22.77 (4.77)</td>
<td>M = 23.58 (5.42)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Single Item Forgiveness – Former partner</td>
<td><strong>n = 13</strong></td>
<td><strong>n = 7</strong></td>
<td><strong>n = 11</strong></td>
<td><strong>n = 13</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>M = 2.85 (1.14)</td>
<td>M = 2.71 (1.38)</td>
<td>M = 2.55 (1.21)</td>
<td>M = 2.08 (1.26)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Single Item Forgiveness – Self</td>
<td><strong>n = 13</strong></td>
<td><strong>n = 7</strong></td>
<td><strong>n = 11</strong></td>
<td><strong>n = 13</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>M = 3.31 (0.95)</td>
<td>M = 2.86 (1.07)</td>
<td>M = 3.18 (1.08)</td>
<td>M = 2.62 (1.19)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heartland Forgiveness Scale – Self</td>
<td><strong>n = 13</strong></td>
<td><strong>n = 7</strong></td>
<td><strong>n = 11</strong></td>
<td><strong>n = 13</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>M = 34.08 (5.38)</td>
<td>M = 22.43 (3.21)</td>
<td>M = 31.91 (8.47)</td>
<td>M = 24.54 (8.05)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**T3**

| Personal Feelings Questionnaire – Shame subscale       | **n = 7**    | **n = 5**     | **n = 7**     | **n = 6**     |
|                                                        | M = 13.0 (4.62) | M = 19.2 (6.3) | M = 10.86 (6.15) | M = 11.67 (5.89) |
Table 4

Descriptive Statistics of Dependent Variables at T1, T2, and T3

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<th>Scale</th>
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<th>n = 4</th>
<th>n = 7</th>
<th>n = 6</th>
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<tbody>
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<td></td>
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<td>(5.32)</td>
<td>(4.61)</td>
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<tr>
<td>State Anger Scale-Self</td>
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<td>n = 7</td>
<td>n = 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>M = 12.14</td>
<td>M = 13.4</td>
<td>M = 12.57</td>
<td>M = 12.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(3.58)</td>
<td>(3.13)</td>
<td>(2.94)</td>
<td>(4.18)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State Rosenberg Self-Esteem</td>
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<td>n = 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>M = 32.43</td>
<td>M = 26.4</td>
<td>M = 34.86</td>
<td>M = 30.5</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(4.89)</td>
<td>(4.93)</td>
<td>(4.45)</td>
<td>(3.93)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-Compassion Scale – Self-Kindness</td>
<td>n = 7</td>
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<td>n = 7</td>
<td>n = 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>subscale</td>
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<td>M = 16.57</td>
<td>M = 16.0</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(4.16)</td>
<td>(3.65)</td>
<td>(6.27)</td>
<td>(2.45)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>n = 6</td>
<td>n = 6</td>
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<tr>
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<td>(2.32)</td>
<td>(5.27)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Motivations – Revenge subscale</td>
<td>M = 8.71</td>
<td>M = 7.0</td>
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<td>(3.65)</td>
<td>(1.89)</td>
<td>(6.59)</td>
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<td>n = 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Motivations – Avoidance subscale</td>
<td>M = 16.71</td>
<td>M = 14.6</td>
<td>M = 15.71</td>
<td>M = 18.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>(8.53)</td>
<td>(9.88)</td>
<td>(7.63)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>n = 7</td>
<td>n = 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Motivations – Self Revenge subscale</td>
<td>M = 8.14</td>
<td>M = 11.4</td>
<td>M = 5.57</td>
<td>M = 6.0</td>
</tr>
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<td>(5.03)</td>
<td>(1.13)</td>
<td>(1.55)</td>
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<td>n = 7</td>
<td>n = 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Motivations – Self Avoidance subscale</td>
<td>M = 12.43</td>
<td>M = 19.4</td>
<td>M = 10.29</td>
<td>M = 15.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(5.53)</td>
<td>(8.62)</td>
<td>(5.06)</td>
<td>(5.01)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transgression Related Interpersonal</td>
<td>n = 7</td>
<td>n = 5</td>
<td>n = 7</td>
<td>n = 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Motivations – Conciliation</td>
<td>M = 23.57</td>
<td>M = 23.6</td>
<td>M = 24.0</td>
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<td>(4.50)</td>
<td>(5.51)</td>
<td>(5.0)</td>
<td>(3.92)</td>
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<td>Single Item Forgiveness – Former partner</td>
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<td>n = 7</td>
<td>n = 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>M = 2.71</td>
<td>M = 3.6</td>
<td>M = 2.86</td>
<td>M = 2.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(1.25)</td>
<td>(0.55)</td>
<td>(1.35)</td>
<td>(1.37)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Single Item Forgiveness – Self</td>
<td>n = 7</td>
<td>n = 5</td>
<td>n = 7</td>
<td>n = 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>M = 3.0</td>
<td>M = 3.2</td>
<td>M = 3.57</td>
<td>M = 3.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.82)</td>
<td>(0.84)</td>
<td>(0.79)</td>
<td>(0.52)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heartland Forgiveness Scale – Self</td>
<td>n = 6</td>
<td>n = 4</td>
<td>n = 7</td>
<td>n = 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>M = 30.17</td>
<td>M = 24.5</td>
<td>M = 31.57</td>
<td>M = 29.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(7.25)</td>
<td>(1.29)</td>
<td>(6.5)</td>
<td>(3.65)</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Primary Data Analyses

Research Hypothesis #1

A series of one-way analyses of variances (ANOVAs) and one-way multivariate analyses of variances (MANOVAs) were conducted to assess the impact of attachment style at T1 on scores of relationship variables (as measured by the R-7, S-SAS, DAS-7, and the relationship information survey), individual variables (as measured by the TFS, PANAS-PA, PANAS-NA, and PFQ2), attitudes towards self (as measured by the S-RSE and SCS), forgiveness (as measured by the TRIM-C, SIF-partner, SIF-Self, and HFS-S), and unforgiveness (as measured by the TRIM and TRIM-S). For each of the following analyses, the independent variable is attachment style as measured by the RQ (i.e., identification of one of four discrete attachment styles). Preliminary assumption testing was conducted for the following analyses to check for normality, linearity, univariate, and multivariate outliers, homogeneity of variance-covariance matrices, and multicollinearity, with no serious violations noted. The purpose of this analysis was to determine whether people with different attachment styles differed on the major groupings of dependent variables. This knowledge not only informs about the participants, but it also reveals possible sources of confounding variables for the main (second) hypothesis, which considers group differences in attachment. If attachment styles differ significantly in their scores for any dependent variables, these DVs will be controlled for in the main hypotheses by using them as covariate variables.

Relationship variables. A one-way between-groups multivariable analysis of variance was performed to investigate attachment style differences in emotional response to participant’s own relational transgression (i.e., how participants contributed to the break-
Two dependent variables were used: anger at self and regret. There was no statistically significant difference between Secure, Preoccupied, Dismissive, and Fearful attachment styles on the combined dependent variables, multivariate $F(6, 130) = 1.43, p = .209$; Wilks’ Lambda = .88; partial eta squared = .06. Due to the non-significant result of the overall MANOVA, there was no need to further examine the significance of the dependent variables. Another one-way between-groups multivariable analysis of variance was performed to investigate attachment style differences in aspects of the former relationship. Four dependent variables were used: length of relationship in months, most commitment felt in the relationship, commitment felt at the time of the breakup, and relationship quality. There was no statistically significant difference between Secure, Preoccupied, Dismissive, and Fearful attachment styles on the combined dependent variables, multivariate $F(12, 156.39) = .86, p = .585$; Wilks’ Lambda = .86; partial eta squared = .06. Due to the non-significant result of the overall MANOVA, there was no need to further examine the significance of the dependent variables. See Table 5 for a summary of the results.

**Individual variables.** A one-way between-groups multivariable analysis of variance was performed to investigate attachment style differences in negative general affect. Three dependent variables were used: negative affect (PANAS-NA), shame and guilt (both measured by the PFQ2). There was a statistically significant effect of attachment style on the combined dependent variables, multivariate $F(9, 151.04) = 2.22, p = .024$; Wilks’ Lambda = .74; partial eta squared = .10. When the results for the dependent variables were considered separately, two measures reached statistical significance: negative affect, $F(3, 64) = 3.45, p = .022$; partial eta squared = .14; and guilt, $F(3, 64) = 2.99, p = .038$; partial eta squared = .12. An inspection of the mean scores indicated that participants did not differ significantly
Table 5

Results for Time 1 Group Means for Four Attachment Styles, Multivariate- and Univariate-F Ratios for Former-Relationship Dependent Variables

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ATTACHMENT STYLE</th>
<th>Secure</th>
<th>Preoccupied</th>
<th>Dismissive</th>
<th>Fearful</th>
<th>Univariate $F$</th>
<th>Effect Size</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Emotional Responses to Own Relational Transgression MANOVA</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Multivariate $F (6, 130) = 1.43\text{ns}$</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anger at Self</td>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>14.43</td>
<td>16.67</td>
<td>16.60</td>
<td>18.42</td>
<td>0.78\text{ns}</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SD (n)</td>
<td>7.16 (21)</td>
<td>6.98 (15)</td>
<td>7.60 (15)</td>
<td>10.64 (19)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regret</td>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>36.14</td>
<td>33.60</td>
<td>34.87</td>
<td>41.95</td>
<td>2.37\text{ns}</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SD (n)</td>
<td>10.30 (21)</td>
<td>11.50 (15)</td>
<td>6.96 (15)</td>
<td>10.64 (19)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aspects of Former Relationship MANOVA</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Multivariate $F (12, 156.39) = 0.86\text{ns}$</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Length of relationship in months</td>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>22.37</td>
<td>17.53</td>
<td>24.23</td>
<td>11.53</td>
<td>1.74\text{ns}</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SD (n)</td>
<td>15.88 (19)</td>
<td>13.49 (16)</td>
<td>26.19 (15)</td>
<td>10.33 (16)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Most commitment felt in the entire relationship</td>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>8.84</td>
<td>8.56</td>
<td>8.73</td>
<td>8.56</td>
<td>0.08\text{ns}</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SD (n)</td>
<td>1.34 (19)</td>
<td>2.28 (16)</td>
<td>2.52 (15)</td>
<td>1.97 (16)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commitment felt at time of breakup</td>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>7.47</td>
<td>6.94</td>
<td>6.20</td>
<td>7.50</td>
<td>0.85\text{ns}</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SD (n)</td>
<td>2.32 (19)</td>
<td>2.84 (16)</td>
<td>3.23 (15)</td>
<td>2.13 (16)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relationship quality (DAS-7)</td>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>24.89</td>
<td>22.38</td>
<td>22.60</td>
<td>23.00</td>
<td>0.82\text{ns}</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SD (n)</td>
<td>5.64 (19)</td>
<td>6.98 (15)</td>
<td>4.17 (15)</td>
<td>3.93 (16)</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* $p < .05$ ** $p < .01$. *** $p < .001$; †= small effect size, ††= medium effect size, †††= large effect size

\(^{a,b}\) Means that means are not different at $p < .05$ are indicated by the same superscript
on scores of negative affect based on attachment style. Post-hoc comparisons using the Tukey HSD test showed that those participants with a Secure attachment style reported significantly less guilt \((M = 5.42, SD = 3.29)\) than did participants with Fearful \((M = 9.63, SD = 4.42)\) styles. Preoccupied participants \((M = 7.40, SD = 4.63)\) and Dismissing participants \((M = 7.47, SD = 5.05)\) did not differ significantly from each other or the other attachment types. Because this variable will be tested in the main 3-way hypothesis, guilt will be used as a covariate to control for group differences.

A one-way between-groups analysis of variance was conducted to explore the impact of attachment style differences on levels of positive affect, as measured by the PANAS-PA. Attachment style was assigned based on participants’ responses on the RQ. There was no significant difference at the \(p < .05\) level in PANAS-Positive Affect scores for the four attachment styles: univariate \(F (3, 70) = 1.91, p = .137\). A one-way between-groups analysis of variance was conducted to explore the impact of attachment style differences on levels of dispositional forgivingness, as measured by the TFS. Attachment style was assigned based on participants’ responses on the RQ. There was a significant difference at the \(p < .05\) level in TFS scores for the four attachment styles: univariate \(F (3, 70) = 3.75, p = .015\). The effect size, calculated using eta squared, was .14 (large). Post-hoc comparisons using the Tukey HSD test indicated that the mean score for participants in the Dismissive \((M = 36.27, SD = 6.16)\) attachment category reported significantly greater trait forgivingness than participants in the Fearful \((M = 29.50, SD = 5.24)\) category. The Secure \((M = 33.82, SD = 7.03)\) and Preoccupied \((M = 30.00, SD = 8.71)\) groups did not differ significantly either from each other or the Dismissive or Fearful categories. See Table 6 for a summary of the results.
Table 6

Results for Time 1 Group Means for Four Attachment Styles, Multivariate- and Univariate-F Ratios for Individual Emotional and Social Dependent Variables

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ATTACHMENT STYLE</th>
<th>Secure</th>
<th>Preoccupied</th>
<th>Dismissive</th>
<th>Fearful</th>
<th>Univariate F</th>
<th>Effect Size</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Negative General Affect MANOVA</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Multivariate F (9, 151.04) = 2.22*</td>
<td>0.10††</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative Affect Mean</td>
<td>22.11</td>
<td>27.93</td>
<td>21.73</td>
<td>28.47</td>
<td>3.45*</td>
<td>0.14†††</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SD (n)</td>
<td>6.40 (19)</td>
<td>8.46 (15)</td>
<td>8.21 (15)</td>
<td>9.14 (19)</td>
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<td>Shame Mean</td>
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<td>16.13</td>
<td>12.73</td>
<td>16.47</td>
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<td>5.02 (19)</td>
<td>5.99 (15)</td>
<td>6.57 (15)</td>
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<td>Guilt Mean</td>
<td>5.42 a</td>
<td>7.40 a,b</td>
<td>7.47 a,b</td>
<td>9.63 b</td>
<td>2.99*</td>
<td>0.12††</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SD (n)</td>
<td>3.29 (19)</td>
<td>4.63 (15)</td>
<td>5.05 (15)</td>
<td>4.42 (19)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Positive General Affect ANOVA</td>
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<td>1.91ns</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>38.85</td>
<td>36.29</td>
<td>36.33</td>
<td>33.68</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>SD (n)</td>
<td>6.98 (20)</td>
<td>7.20 (17)</td>
<td>5.16 (15)</td>
<td>7.14 (19)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dispositional Forgivingness ANOVA</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3.75*</td>
<td>0.14†††</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>33.82 a,b</td>
<td>30.00 a,b</td>
<td>36.27 a</td>
<td>29.50 b</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SD (n)</td>
<td>7.03 (22)</td>
<td>8.71 (14)</td>
<td>6.16 (15)</td>
<td>5.24 (20)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* p = .05  ** p = .01  *** p = .001; †= small effect size, ††= medium effect size, †††= large effect size

a, b Means that are not different at p < .05 are indicated by the same superscript
Attitudes towards self. A one-way between-groups multivariable analysis of variance was performed to investigate attachment style differences in positive attitudes towards the self. Two dependent variables were used: general state self-esteem and self-compassion in the area of self-kindness. There was no statistically significant difference between Secure, Preoccupied, Dismissive, and Fearful attachment styles on the combined dependent variables, multivariate $F(6, 124) = 1.69, p = .129$; Wilks’ Lambda = .86; partial eta squared = .08.

A one-way between-groups analysis of variance was performed to investigate attachment style differences in negative attitude towards the self. Self-compassion in the area of self-judgment (SCS) was used as the dependent variable. There was no statistically significant difference between Secure, Preoccupied, Dismissive, and Fearful attachment styles on the combined dependent variables, univariate $F(3, 70) = 2.68, p = .054$; partial eta squared = .11. See Table 7 for a summary of the results.

Feelings of unforgiveness. A one-way between-groups multivariable analysis of variance was performed to investigate attachment style differences in feelings of unforgiveness of self. Two dependent variables were used: self-retribution motivations and self-avoidance motivations (both measured by the TRIM-S). There was a statistically significant difference between Secure, Preoccupied, Dismissive, and Fearful attachment styles on the combined dependent variables, multivariate $F(6, 136) = 3.50, p = .003$; Wilks’ Lambda = .75; partial eta squared = .13. When the results for the dependent variables were considered separately, the only difference to reach statistical significance was self-avoidance motivations, univariate $F(3, 69) = 3.97, p = .011$; partial eta squared = .15. An inspection of the mean scores indicated that those participants with Fearful ($M = 18.85, SD = 5.39$)
Table 7

Results for Time 1 Group Means for Four Attachment Styles, Multivariate- and Univariate-F Ratios for Attitudes Toward Self
Dependent Variables

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ATTACHMENT STYLE</th>
<th>Secure</th>
<th>Preoccupied</th>
<th>Dismissive</th>
<th>Fearful</th>
<th>Univariate F</th>
<th>Effect Size</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Positive Attitudes Toward Self MANOVA</td>
<td>31.90</td>
<td>29.15</td>
<td>31.64</td>
<td>27.11</td>
<td>Multivariate F (6,124) = 1.69ns</td>
<td>2.69ns</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General state self-esteem</td>
<td>5.58 (21)</td>
<td>5.58 (13)</td>
<td>6.40 (14)</td>
<td>6.11 (19)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>14.00</td>
<td>13.69</td>
<td>15.85</td>
<td>12.63</td>
<td>1.48ns</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SD (n)</td>
<td>4.10 (21)</td>
<td>4.15 (13)</td>
<td>5.27 (14)</td>
<td>4.07 (19)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-compassion: Kindness</td>
<td>4.10 (21)</td>
<td>4.15 (13)</td>
<td>5.27 (14)</td>
<td>4.07 (19)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>15.91</td>
<td>12.47</td>
<td>16.13</td>
<td>13.42</td>
<td>2.68ns</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SD (n)</td>
<td>4.43 (22)</td>
<td>3.76 (15)</td>
<td>4.98 (15)</td>
<td>4.93 (19)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Negative Attitudes Toward Self: Self-judgment ANOVA

| Mean | 15.91  | 12.47 | 16.13 | 13.42 | 2.68ns       |             |
| SD (n) | 4.43 (22) | 3.76 (15)  | 4.98 (15)  | 4.93 (19) |              |             |

* p = .05  ** p = .01  *** p = .001; †= small effect size, ††= medium effect size, †††= large effect size

Means that are not different at p < .05 are indicated by the same superscript.
attachment styles reported significantly more self-avoidance than Secure ($M = 13.00$, $SD = 6.47$) or Dismissive ($M = 13.33$, $SD = 6.09$) participants. Preoccupied ($M = 13.94$, $SD = 6.41$) participants did not differ from any group. Because this variable will be tested in the main 3-way hypothesis, avoidance of self will be used as a covariate to control for group differences.

Another one-way between-groups multivariable analysis of variance was performed to investigate attachment style differences in feelings of unforgiveness of the ex-partner. Two dependent variables were used: retribution motivations and avoidance motivations. There was no statistically significant difference between Secure, Preoccupied, Dismissive, and Fearful attachment styles on the combined dependent variables, multivariate $F (6, 134) = .52$, $p = .792$; Wilks’ Lambda = .96; partial eta squared = .02. Due to the non-significant result of the MANOVA, there was no need to further examine the significance of the dependent variables. See Table 8 for a summary of results.

**Feelings of forgiveness.** A one-way between-groups multivariable analysis of variance was performed to investigate attachment style differences in indicators of self-forgiveness. Two dependent variables were used: a single item endorsing level of self-forgiveness (SIF-Self) and the HFS-Self forgiveness scale. There was no statistically significant difference between Secure, Preoccupied, Dismissive, and Fearful attachment styles on the combined dependent variables, multivariate $F (6, 136) = .91$, $p = .49$; Wilks’ Lambda = .92; partial eta squared = .04. Due to the non-significant result of the MANOVA, there was no need to further examine the significance of the dependent variables.

Another one-way between-groups multivariable analysis of variance was performed to investigate attachment style differences in indicators of forgiveness of ex-partner. Two
Table 8

Results for Time 1 Group Means for Four Attachment Styles, Multivariate- and Univariate-F Ratios for Feelings of Unforgiveness Dependent Variables

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ATTACHMENT STYLE</th>
<th>Secure</th>
<th>Preoccupied</th>
<th>Dismissive</th>
<th>Fearful</th>
<th>Univariate $F$</th>
<th>Effect Size</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Presence of Unforgiveness of Self MANOVA</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Multivariate $F (6,136) = 3.50^{**}$</td>
<td>0.13^{††}</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-retribution motivations Mean</td>
<td>8.41</td>
<td>9.88</td>
<td>8.93</td>
<td>10.05</td>
<td>0.62ns</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SD (n)</td>
<td>4.19 (22)</td>
<td>5.03 (16)</td>
<td>4.28 (15)</td>
<td>4.21 (20)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-avoidance motivations Mean</td>
<td>13.00&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>13.94&lt;sup&gt;a,b&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>13.33&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>18.85&lt;sup&gt;b&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>3.97&lt;sup&gt;**&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>0.15&lt;sup&gt;†††&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SD (n)</td>
<td>6.47 (22)</td>
<td>6.41 (16)</td>
<td>6.09 (15)</td>
<td>5.39 (20)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presence of Unforgiveness of Ex-Partner MANOVA</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Multivariate $F (6,134) = 0.52ns$</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Revenge motivations Mean</td>
<td>9.41</td>
<td>11.20</td>
<td>9.73</td>
<td>11.15</td>
<td>0.61ns</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SD (n)</td>
<td>4.78 (22)</td>
<td>5.32 (15)</td>
<td>5.04 (15)</td>
<td>5.60 (20)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Avoidance motivations Mean</td>
<td>20.23</td>
<td>20.00</td>
<td>20.40</td>
<td>22.75</td>
<td>0.45ns</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SD (n)</td>
<td>9.40 (22)</td>
<td>10.11 (15)</td>
<td>7.31 (15)</td>
<td>6.04 (20)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* $p=.05$  ** $p=.01$  *** $p = .001$; †= small effect size, ††= medium effect size, †††= large effect size
<sup>a,b</sup> Means that are not different at $p < .05$ are indicated by the same superscript
dependent variables were used: conciliatory motivations (TRIM-C) and a single item
endorsing level of forgiveness of partner (SIF-Partner). There was no statistically significant
difference between Secure, Preoccupied, Dismissive, and Fearful attachment styles on the
combined dependent variables, multivariate $F(6, 132) = .65, p = .692$; Wilks’ Lambda = .94;
partial eta squared = .03. Due to the non-significant result of the MANOVA, there was no
need to further examine the significance of the dependent variables. See Table 9 for a
summary of results.

**Research Hypothesis #2**

Data were analyzed with a series of repeated measures (time 1 versus time 2 versus
time 3) between- and within-subjects three-way (attachment style: *Secure* versus *Preoccupied* versus *Dismissive* versus *Fearful*; treatment condition: *Immediate Treatment* versus *Waitlist Treatment* x time (within subjects) analyses of covariance (ANCOVAs) and multivariate analyses of covariance (MANCOVAs). ANCOVAs and MANCOVAs were performed because initial scores on two dependent variable measures (PFQ2-Guilt and TRIM-AS) were found to be different between attachment style groups. In order to control for existing differences between groups before participation in the self-forgiveness intervention, each participant’s scores on the PFQ2-Guilt and TRIM-AS were used as covariates in these analyses.

Participants’ attachment types as chosen on the RQ (in which people self-categorized into one of four discrete attachment styles) and their treatment condition (immediate treatment or waiting list) as randomly assigned were used to compare group means on the dependent variable(s) at time 1, time 2, and time 3. If a significant three-way interaction was found, then post-hoc analyses were performed on each of the subjects in each attachment
Table 9

Results for Time 1 Group Means for Four Attachment Styles, Multivariate- and Univariate-F Ratios for Feelings of Forgiveness

Dependent Variables

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ATTACHMENT STYLE</th>
<th>Secure</th>
<th>Preoccupied</th>
<th>Dismissive</th>
<th>Fearful</th>
<th>Univariate F</th>
<th>Effect Size</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Indicators of Self-Forgiveness MANOVA
- Single item of self-forgiveness
  - Mean: 2.91, 2.75, 3.13, 2.40
  - SD (n): 1.27 (22), 1.13 (16), 1.13 (15), 1.27 (20)

- Heartland Forgiveness Scale-Self
  - Mean: 28.82, 26.63, 27.93, 26.05
  - SD (n): 4.88 (22), 5.76 (16), 5.43 (15), 5.24 (20)

Multivariate F (6,136) = 0.91ns

Indicators of Forgiveness of Ex-Partner MANOVA
- Conciliatory motivations
  - Mean: 20.29, 22.00, 20.07, 19.68
  - SD (n): 5.76 (21), 5.29 (16), 4.96 (15), 6.74 (19)

- Single item of forgiveness
  - Mean: 2.52, 2.25, 2.27, 2.00
  - SD (n): 1.25 (21), 1.24 (16), 1.16 (15), 0.88 (19)

Multivariate F (6, 132) = 0.65ns

* p = .05  ** p = .01  *** p = .001; †= small effect size, ††= medium effect size, †††= large effect size

a, b Means that are not different at p < .05 are indicated by the same superscript
style. Namely, for the participants in each attachment style, a 2 [treatment condition (immediate treatment versus waiting list)] x 3 [time (S)] ANCOVA or MANCOVA was performed on each single or grouped set of dependent variables. If that two-way interaction was significant, then simple main effects were calculated as follows: at time 1, the immediate treatment and waiting list participants were not expected to differ; at time 2, the immediate treatment participants were expected to be more forgiving, or less unforgiving, of self; at time 3, the waiting list participants were hypothesized to become equally forgiving as were immediate treatment participants, resulting in no difference. See Table 10 for a summary of results.

**Relationship variables.** A repeated measures (time 1 versus time 2 versus time 3) between- and within-subjects three-way analysis of covariance (ANCOVA) was conducted to explore the impact of attachment and intervention participation (i.e., treatment group) over time (S) on emotional response to own transgression, as measured by the State Anger Scale-Self (SAS-S). Attachment style was assigned based on participants’ responses on the RQ.

The three way interaction between attachment style x treatment condition x time (S) was not significant, univariate $F(6, 28) = 2.03, p = .095; \text{ partial } \eta^2 = .30$. Due to the non-significant result of this analysis, there was no need to further examine the significance of the dependent variables. The two way interaction between treatment condition x time (S) was not significant, univariate $F(2, 28) = 3.06, p = .063; \text{ partial } \eta^2 = .18$. Due to the non-significant result of this analysis, there was no need to further examine the significance of the dependent variables.

**Individual variables.** A repeated measures (time 1 versus time 2 versus time 3) between- and within-subjects three-way multivariate analysis of covariance (MANCOVA)
Table 10


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Multivariate F</th>
<th>Univariate F</th>
<th>Multivariate F</th>
<th>Univariate F</th>
<th>Condition at T1</th>
<th>Condition at T2</th>
<th>Condition at T3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Former Relationship Variables (ANCOVA)</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>SAS-Self</td>
<td>2.03 ns</td>
<td></td>
<td>3.06 ns</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Individual Variables – Negative general affect</strong> (MANCOVA)</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>.91 ns</td>
<td></td>
<td>.94 ns</td>
<td>1.10 ns</td>
<td>.52 ns</td>
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<tr>
<td>PFQ2-Shame</td>
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<td>.80 ns</td>
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<td>2.20 ns</td>
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<td>PFQ2-Guilt</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Attitudes Toward Self – Positive attitudes</strong> (MANCOVA)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>.84 ns</td>
<td></td>
<td>1.36 ns</td>
<td>1.28 ns</td>
<td>2.68 ns</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>SRSE</td>
<td></td>
<td>.57 ns</td>
<td></td>
<td>.22 ns</td>
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<tr>
<td>SCS-Kind</td>
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<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Attitudes Toward Self – Negative attitudes</strong> (ANOVA)</td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SCS-Self Judgment</td>
<td>.42 ns</td>
<td></td>
<td>2.31 ns</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 10


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Condition at T1</th>
<th>Condition at T2</th>
<th>Condition at T3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Unforgiveness – Self (MANCOVA)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multivariate $F$</td>
<td>Univariate $F$</td>
<td>Multivariate $F$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AS x C x t(S)</td>
<td>AS x C x t(s)</td>
<td>C x t(S)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.74 ns</td>
<td>1.19 ns</td>
<td>1.85 ns</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TRIM-RS</td>
<td>TRIM-AS</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>.54 ns</td>
<td>.13 ns</td>
<td>1.26 ns</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TRIM-R</td>
<td>TRIM-A</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>.81 ns</td>
<td>.93 ns</td>
<td>1.70 ns</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HFS-S</td>
<td>SIF-Self</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>.71 ns</td>
<td>.36 ns</td>
<td>.95 ns</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TRIM-C</td>
<td>SIF-Partner</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* $p < .05$  ** $p < .01$  *** $p < .001$
was conducted to explore the impact of attachment and intervention participation (i.e.,
treatment group) over time (S) on negative general affect, as measured by the PFQ2.
Attachment style was assigned based on participants’ responses on the RQ. The three way
interaction between attachment style x treatment condition x time (S) was not significant,
multivariate $F(12, 46) = .91$; Wilks’ lambda = .66; $p = .549$; partial eta squared = .19. Due
to the non-significant result of this analysis, there was no need to further examine the
significance of the dependent variables. The two way interaction between treatment
condition x time (S) was not significant, multivariate $F(4, 46) = 1.10$; Wilks’ lambda = .83;
$p = .367$; partial eta squared = .09. Due to the non-significant result of this analysis, there
was no need to further examine the significance of the dependent variables.

**Attitudes toward self.** A repeated measures (time 1 versus time 2 versus time 3)
between- and within-subjects three-way multivariate analysis of covariance (MANCOVA)
was conducted to explore the impact of attachment and intervention participation (i.e.,
treatment group) over time (S) on positive attitudes towards self, as measured by the State
Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (S-RSE) and the Self-kindness subscale of the Self
Compassion Scale (SCS-SK). Attachment style was assigned based on participants’
responses on the RQ. The three way interaction between attachment style x treatment
condition x time (S) was not significant, multivariate $F(12, 42) = .84$; Wilks’ lambda = .65;
$p = .615$; partial eta squared = .19. Due to the non-significant result of this analysis, there
was no need to further examine the significance of the dependent variables. The two way
interaction between treatment condition x time (S) was not significant, multivariate $F(4, 42)
= 1.28$; Wilks’ lambda = .79; $p = .292$; partial eta squared = .11. Due to the non-significant
result of this analysis, there was no need to further examine the significance of the dependent variables.

A repeated measures (time 1 versus time 2 versus time 3) between- and within-subjects three-way analysis of covariance (ANCOVA) was conducted to explore the impact of attachment and intervention participation (i.e., treatment group) over time (S) on negative attitudes towards self, as measured by the Self-judgment subscale of the Self Compassion Scale (SCS-SJ). Attachment style was assigned based on participants’ responses on the RQ. The three way interaction between attachment style x treatment condition x time (S) was not significant, univariate $F(6, 30) = .42; p = .860; \text{partial eta squared} = .08$. Due to the non-significant result of this analysis, there was no need to further examine the significance of the dependent variables. The two way interaction between treatment condition x time (S) was not significant, univariate $F(2, 30) = 2.31; p = .116; \text{partial eta squared} = .13$. Due to the non-significant result of this analysis, there was no need to further examine the significance of the dependent variables.

Feelings of unforgiveness. A repeated measures (time 1 versus time 2 versus time 3) between- and within-subjects three-way multivariate analysis of covariance (MANCOVA) was conducted to explore the impact of attachment and intervention participation (i.e., treatment group) over time (S) on unforgiveness of self, as measured by the Transgression Related Interpersonal Motivations- Self (TRIM-S) subscales of retribution motivations and avoidance motivations. Attachment style was assigned based on participants’ responses on the RQ. The three way interaction between attachment style x treatment condition x time (S) was not significant, multivariate $F(12, 58) = 1.74; \text{Wilks’ lambda} = .54; p = .082; \text{partial eta squared} = .26$. Due to the non-significant result of this analysis, there was no need to further
examine the significance of the dependent variables. The *two way interaction* between treatment condition x time (S) was not significant, multivariate $F(4, 58) = 1.85$; Wilks’ lambda = .79; $p = .132$; partial eta squared = .11. Due to the non-significant result of this analysis, there was no need to further examine the significance of the dependent variables.

A repeated measures (time 1 versus time 2 versus time 3) between- and within-subjects three-way multivariate analysis of covariance (MANCOVA) was conducted to explore the impact of attachment and intervention participation (i.e., treatment group) over time (S) on *unforgiveness of ex-partner*, as measured by the Transgression Related Interpersonal Motivations (TRIM) subscales of *revenge motivations* and *avoidance motivations*. Attachment style was assigned based on participants’ responses on the RQ. The *three way interaction* between attachment style x treatment condition x time (S) was not significant, multivariate $F(12, 54) = .54$; Wilks’ lambda = .80; $p = .878$; partial eta squared = .11. Due to the non-significant result of this analysis, there was no need to further examine the significance of the dependent variables. The *two way interaction* between treatment condition x time (S) was not significant, multivariate $F(4, 54) = 1.26$; Wilks’ lambda = .84; $p = .299$; partial eta squared = .09. Due to the non-significant result of this analysis, there was no need to further examine the significance of the dependent variables.

**Feelings of forgiveness.** A repeated measures (time 1 versus time 2 versus time 3) between- and within-subjects three-way multivariate analysis of covariance (MANCOVA) was conducted to explore the impact of attachment and intervention participation (i.e., treatment group) over time (S) on *forgiveness of self*, as measured by the Heartland Forgiveness Scale’s (HFS) Self subscale and the Single Item of Forgiveness (SIF) for Self. Attachment style was assigned based on participants’ responses on the RQ. The *three way*
interaction between attachment style x treatment condition x time (S) was not significant, multivariate $F(12, 46) = .81$; Wilks’ lambda = .68; $p = .637$; partial eta squared = .18. Due to the non-significant result of this analysis, there was no need to further examine the significance of the dependent variables. The two way interaction between treatment condition x time (S) was not significant, multivariate $F(4, 46) = 1.70$; Wilks’ lambda = .76; $p = .165$; partial eta squared = .13. Due to the non-significant result of this analysis, there was no need to further examine the significance of the dependent variables.

A repeated measures (time 1 versus time 2 versus time 3) between- and within-subjects three-way multivariate analysis of covariance (MANCOVA) was conducted to explore the impact of attachment and intervention participation (i.e., treatment group) over time (S) on forgiveness of ex-partner, as measured by the Transgression Related Interpersonal Motivations- Conciliation (TRIM-C) scales and the Single Item of Forgiveness (SIF) for ex-partner. Attachment style was assigned based on participants’ responses on the RQ. The three way interaction between attachment style x treatment condition x time (S) was not significant, multivariate $F(12, 56) = .71$; Wilks’ lambda = .75; $p = .737$; partial eta squared = .14. Due to the non-significant result of this analysis, there was no need to further examine the significance of the dependent variables. The two way interaction between treatment condition x time (S) was not significant, multivariate $F(4, 54) = .94$; Wilks’ lambda = .87; $p = .450$; partial eta squared = .07. Due to the non-significant result of this analysis, there was no need to further examine the significance of the dependent variables.

**Research Hypothesis #3**

Data were analyzed with a series of two-way 2 [treatment condition (immediate treatment versus waiting list)] x 3 [time (S)] ANOVAs or MANOVAs with repeated
measures on each single or grouped set of dependent variables. As these analyses collapsed attachment styles together, there were no variables that needed to be controlled to account for group differences (i.e., no covariates were needed). If any of these two-way interactions were significant, then simple main effects were calculated as follows: at time 1, the immediate treatment and waiting list participants were not expected to differ; at time 2, the immediate treatment participants were expected to be more forgiving, or less unforgiving, of self; at time 3, the waiting list participants were hypothesized to become equally forgiving as were immediate treatment participants, resulting in no difference. Preliminary assumption testing was conducted for the following analyses to check for normality, linearity, univariate, and multivariate outliers, homogeneity of variance-covariance matrices, and multicollinearity, with no serious violations noted. See Table 11 for a summary of the results of the analyses.

**Relationship variables.** A repeated measures (time 1 versus time 2 versus time 3) between- and within-subjects two-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was conducted to explore the impact of intervention participation (i.e., treatment group) over time (S) on emotional response to own transgression, as measured by the State Anger Scale- Self (SAS-S). Attachment style was assigned based on participants’ responses on the RQ. The two-way interaction between treatment condition x time (S) was significant, univariate $F (2, 44) = 3.26, p = .048$. Due to the significant result of this analysis, additional ANOVAs were conducted to examine the differences between treatment condition groups at each of the three measurement times. The differences in scores between treatment groups were insignificant at time 1, univariate $F (1, 71) = .15, p = .705$, time 2, univariate $F (1, 44) = 2.18, p = .147$, and time 3, univariate $F (1, 24) = 1.58, p = .222$. 101
Table 11

Multivariate and Univariate two-way interactions (condition [2] x time [3]) and applicable follow-up analyses for each dependent variable

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Multivariate F C x t(S)</th>
<th>Univariate F C x t(S)</th>
<th>IT Mean (n) SD</th>
<th>WC Mean (n) SD</th>
<th>Condition at T1</th>
<th>Condition at T2</th>
<th>Condition at T3</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Former Relationship Variables (ANOVA)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>T1 16.28 (38) 7.16</td>
<td>T1 17.03 (34) 9.83</td>
<td>IT = WL ns</td>
<td>IT = WL ns</td>
<td>IT = WL ns</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SAS-Self</td>
<td>3.26 *</td>
<td></td>
<td>T2 12.17 (18) 2.96</td>
<td>T2 14.96 (27) 7.63</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>T3 13.27 (15) 3.73</td>
<td>T3 11.60 (10) 2.32</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Individual Variables – Negative general affect (MANOVA)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1.59 ns</td>
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<tr>
<td>PFQ2-Shame</td>
<td>2.40 ns</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PFQ2-Guilt</td>
<td>.64 ns</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Attitudes Toward Self – Positive attitudes (MANOVA)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1.11 ns</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>S-RSE</td>
<td>1.31 ns</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>SCS-Kind</td>
<td>.76 ns</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Attitudes Toward Self – Negative attitudes (ANOVA)</strong></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>SCS-Self Judgment</td>
<td>3.50 *</td>
<td></td>
<td>T1 14.57 (37) 4.49</td>
<td>T1 14.56 (34) 5.03</td>
<td>IT = WL ns</td>
<td>IT = WL ns</td>
<td>IT = WL ns</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>T2 15.76 (17) 3.90</td>
<td>T2 14.30 (27) 4.83</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>T3 16.67 (15) 4.75</td>
<td>T3 15.00 (10) 5.64</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Table 11

Multivariate and Univariate two-way interactions (condition [2] x time [3]) and applicable follow-up analyses for each dependent variable, continued

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Multivariate $F$</th>
<th>Univariate $F$</th>
<th>IT Mean (n) SD</th>
<th>WC Mean (n) SD</th>
<th>Condition at T1</th>
<th>Condition at T2</th>
<th>Condition at T3</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>C x t(S)</td>
<td>C x t(S)</td>
<td>IT</td>
<td>WC</td>
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<tr>
<td>Unforgiveness – Self (MANOVA)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>IT</td>
<td>WC</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>.13 ns</td>
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<tr>
<td>TRIM-RS</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>.58 ns</td>
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<tr>
<td>TRIM-AS</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2.18 ns</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unforgiveness – Ex-partner (MANOVA)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2.10 ns</td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1.20 ns</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>TRIM-R</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3.77 *</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>TRIM-A</td>
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<tr>
<td>Forgiveness – Self (MANOVA)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3.22 *</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1.71 ns</td>
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<tr>
<td>HFS-S</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>SIF-Self</td>
<td>6.93 **</td>
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</table>

T1 2.69 (39)        T1 2.88 (34)        T1 1.17        T1 1.27 1.27 (27) 1.23 ns T1 3.40 (10) .70 ns
Table 11

Multivariate and Univariate two-way interactions (condition [2] x time [3]) and applicable follow-up analyses for each dependent variable, continued

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Multivariate F C x t(S)</th>
<th>Univariate F C x t(S)</th>
<th>IT</th>
<th>WC</th>
<th>Condition at T1</th>
<th>Condition at T2</th>
<th>Condition at T3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Forgiveness – Ex-partner (MANOVA)</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>.92 ns</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>TRIM-C</td>
<td>.45 ns</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>SIF-Partner</td>
<td>1.28 ns</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* p < .05  ** p < .01  *** p < .001
**Individual variables.** A repeated measures (time 1 versus time 2 versus time 3) between- and within-subjects two-way multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) was conducted to explore the impact of intervention participation (i.e., treatment group) over time (S) on *negative general affect*, as measured by the PFQ2. Attachment style was assigned based on participants’ responses on the RQ. The two-way interaction between treatment condition x time (S) was not significant, multivariate $F(4, 74) = 1.60; \text{Wilks’ lambda} = .89; p = .185$. Due to the non-significant result of this analysis, there was no need to further examine the significance of the dependent variables.

**Attitudes towards self.** A repeated measures (time 1 versus time 2 versus time 3) between- and within-subjects two-way multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) was conducted to explore the impact of intervention participation (i.e., treatment group) over time (S) on *positive attitudes toward self*, as measured by the State Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (S-RSE) and the Self-kindness subscale of the Self Compassion Scale (SCS-SK). Attachment style was assigned based on participants’ responses on the RQ. The two-way interaction between treatment condition x time (S) was not significant, multivariate $F(4, 74) = 1.11$, Wilks’ lambda = .89; $p = .359$. Due to the non-significant result of this analysis, there was no need to further examine the significance of the dependent variables.

A repeated measures (time 1 versus time 2 versus time 3) between- and within-subjects two-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was conducted to explore the impact of intervention participation (i.e., treatment group) over time (S) on *negative attitude toward self*, as measured by the Self-judgment subscale of the Self Compassion Scale (SCS-SJ). Attachment style was assigned based on participants’ responses on the RQ. The two-way interaction between treatment condition x time (S) was significant, univariate $F(2, 46) =$
3.50, p = .038. Due to the significant result of this analysis, additional ANOVAs were conducted to examine the differences between treatment condition groups at each of the three measurement times. The differences in scores between treatment groups were not significant at time 1, univariate F (1, 70) = .00, p = .994, time 2, univariate F (1, 43) = 1.11, p = .298, and time 3, univariate F (1, 24) = .64, p = .433.

**Feelings of unforgiveness.** A repeated measures (Time 1 versus Time 2 versus Time 3) between- and within-subjects two-way multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) was conducted to explore the impact of intervention participation (i.e., treatment group) over time (S) on *unforgiveness toward self*, as measured by the Transgression Related Interpersonal Motivations- Self (TRIM-S) subscales of *retribution motivations* and *avoidance motivations*. Attachment style was assigned based on participants’ responses on the RQ. The *two-way interaction* between treatment condition x time (S) was not significant, multivariate F (4, 86) = 1.13; Wilks’ lambda = .90; p = .348. Due to the non-significant result of this analysis, there was no need to further examine the significance of the dependent variables.

A repeated measures (time 1 versus time 2 versus time 3) between- and within-subjects two-way multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) was conducted to explore the impact of intervention participation (i.e., treatment group) over time (S) on *unforgiveness toward ex-partner*, as measured by the Transgression Related Interpersonal Motivations (TRIM) subscales of *revenge motivations* and *avoidance motivations*. Attachment style was assigned based on participants’ responses on the RQ. The *two-way interaction* between treatment condition x time (S) was not significant, multivariate F (4, 86) = 2.10; Wilks’ lambda = .83; p = .087. Due to the non-significant result of this analysis, there was no need to further examine the significance of the dependent variables.
Feelings of forgiveness. A repeated measures (time 1 versus time 2 versus time 3) between- and within-subjects two-way multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) was conducted to explore the impact of intervention participation (i.e., treatment group) over time (S) on forgiveness of self, as measured by the Heartland Forgiveness Scale’s (HFS) Self subscale and the Single Item of Forgiveness (SIF) for Self. Attachment style was assigned based on participants’ responses on the RQ. The two-way interaction between treatment condition x time (S) was significant, multivariate $F(4, 78) = 3.22, p = .017$. Due to the significant result of this analysis, the univariate tests were examined to see where the interaction was significant. Treatment condition did not have a significant effect on participants’ scored on the HFS-S, univariate $F(2, 40) = 1.71, p = .195$, although it did have a significant effect on participants’ scores on the SIF-Self, univariate $F(2, 40) = 6.93, p = .003$. Due to this significance, additional ANOVAs were conducted to examine the differences between treatment condition groups at each of the three measurement times. The differences in scores between treatment groups were not significant at time 1, univariate $F(1, 72) = .44, p = .509$, or at time 3, univariate $F(1, 24) = .43, p = .518$. However, there were significant differences in participants’ scores of self-forgiveness at time 2, univariate $F(1, 43) = 4.36, p = .043$. Although participants’ scores on the SIF-Self were not significantly different at time 1 ($M^\text{IT} = 2.69, SD^\text{IT} = 1.17; M^\text{WL} = 2.88, SD^\text{WL} = 1.27$), or at time 3 ($M^\text{IT} = 3.20, SD^\text{IT} = .78; M^\text{WL} = 3.40, SD^\text{WL} = .70$), the significant differences between treatment groups at time 2 ($M^\text{IT} = 3.41, SD^\text{IT} = .62; M^\text{WL} = 2.74, SD^\text{WL} = 1.23$) support the effectiveness of the intervention. Additional paired-samples t-tests were conducted to evaluate the long-term gains maintained by the IT group between time 2 and time 3. For the IT group, there was not a statistically significant difference in SIF-Self scores from time 2 ($M = 3.33, SD =$
.62) to time 3 (\(M = 3.20, SD = .78\)), \(t(14) = .70, p = .499\). This finding indicates that the IT group not only significantly increased self-forgiveness after the intervention, but also that these increases in self-forgiveness were maintained over two weeks, between time 2 and 3.

A repeated measures (time 1 versus time 2 versus time 3) between- and within-subjects two-way multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) was conducted to explore the impact of intervention participation (i.e., treatment group) over time (S) on forgiveness of ex-partner, as measured by the Transgression Related Interpersonal Motivations-Conciliation (TRIM-C) scale and the Single Item of Forgiveness (SIF) for ex-partner. Attachment style was assigned based on participants’ responses on the RQ. The two-way interaction between treatment condition x time (S) was not significant, multivariate \(F\) (4, 86) = .92; Wilks’ lambda = .92; \(p = .456\). Due to the non-significant result of this analysis, there was no need to further examine the significance of the dependent variables.
Discussion

In the current research, I created an intervention to promote self-forgiveness within a college sample of undergraduates who had, within the previous two months, experienced a breakup. When a relationship ends, both parties are likely to feel some sense of self-unforgiveness for their role in the breakup (Day & Maltby, 2005; Kachadourian et al., 2004; Ruvolo, Fabin, & Ruvolo, 2001). Unforgiving emotions in general result in decreased physical and mental health if not dealt with (Ingersoll-Dayton & Krause, 2005; Maltby et al., 2004; Snyder & Heinze, 2005). Hence, dealing with these feelings of self-unforgiveness obtained from an individual thinking about their role in the dissolution of a romantic relationship becomes necessary. The current intervention, then, was geared to helping participants deal with their role in the breakup and help them to resolve any unforgiveness they held for their actions. I compared a waiting list control condition to an immediate treatment condition in which participants completed online questionnaires and a six-hour online intervention. The results, however, should be interpreted with caution due to the considerable attrition rate experienced in this study. I will refrain from discussing the attrition rate further at this time, and simply refer the reader to the limitations section below for further discussion of the impact of attrition.

General Discussion

Previous research has generally supported that forgiveness and self-forgiveness promote physical and mental well-being (Berry & Worthington, 2001; McCullough et al., 2001; Snyder & Heinze, 2005; Worthington & Scherer, 2004) and that an individual’s attachment style may influence his or her propensity to forgive (Kachadourian, Fincham, &
Davila, 2004). Furthermore, the literature to date has suggested that an individual may make negative self-appraisals for their part in the dissolution of a romantic relationship (Sbarra & Emery, 2005) which may be exacerbated by their attachment style (Kachadourian, Fincham, & Davila, 2004; Ruvolo, Fabin, & Ruvolo, 2001). It is of some concern, then, that the phenomenon of self-forgiveness in the dissolution of a romantic relationship has not been further examined for differences by attachment style. There exist limited empirically supported studies on promoting self-forgiveness for an individual going through a romantic breakup, but exploring this phenomenon by creating a self-forgiveness intervention is a pioneering step in this largely overlooked area. The current study is the first step in an attempt to create a self-forgiveness intervention for women who have recently gone through a breakup with special attention paid to their attachment style and how this may impact their ability or need to forgive themselves.

**Initial Differences by Attachment Styles**

I found that initially there were four differences as a result of attachment styles. In each of these variables, the Fearful (i.e., negative models of both self and other people) participants came out faring worse emotionally (reporting greater negative affect and guilt), being less forgiving of others in general, and reporting greater avoidance of self. Fearful participants’ experience of greater negative emotions – as was evident in the current research – has been supported in the literature. For example, Collins (1996) looked at negative emotions using a sample of undergraduates who imagined themselves to be in a relationship with a fictional partner and who were given Hazan and Shaver’s (1987) Adult Attachment Scale (AAS). She found that people who reported themselves to be Secure in attachment (i.e., positive models of both self and other people) experienced less negative emotions. This
study required participants to imagine a partner, which differs from my method of using participants that have recently ended a real relationship. Another study looking at negative emotions (Feeney, 2005) used a sample of undergraduates who wrote about a hurtful event in a relationship, and were given measures of anxiety and avoidance dimensions in relationships. Feeney found that people high in avoidance reported lower levels of hurt, general distress, and fear. Conversely, people with higher levels of anxiety in relationships reported higher levels of hurt, fear, general distress, and shame. This study did not look at ended relationships, and so their methods resulted in different results from my study. Fearful attachment categories fall into both these findings, as they are high in both relationship anxiety and avoidance (Bartholomew & Horowitz, 1991). Several researchers (Exline et al., 2003; Fincham et al., 2005; Worthington & Scherer, 2004; Worthington & Wade, 1999) have proposed theories on positive and negative motivations (i.e. revenge and avoidance) towards the self. The findings of the current studies, in which participants differed in self-avoidance, support these conceptual papers.

Additionally, the literature suggests that people falling into different attachment categories might reveal differences in their dispositional tendencies to be forgiving of others. Kachadourian and his colleagues (2004) examined undergraduates in dating relationships and found through structural equation modeling that securely attached participants are more likely to forgive their partner of transgressions. Kachadourian’s study did not look at people that have recently experienced a relationship break-up, which is different from my study, but the propensity to forgive partners was supported in the current research.
Effect of Attachment Styles on Response to Immediate Treatment or Waiting List Conditions over Three Time Measurements

Relationship Variables

No significant three-way interactions were found between groups in emotional response to own transgression. Scores in anger at self did not change over time as a result of interactions between attachment styles, condition, and time.

Individual Variables

No significant three-way interactions were found between groups in negative general affect. Scores in shame and guilt did not change over time as a result of interactions between attachment styles, condition, and time.

Attitudes Toward Self

No significant three-way interactions were found between groups in positive or negative attitudes toward self. Scores in state general self-esteem and self-kindness (i.e., positive attitudes toward self) and self-judgment (i.e., negative attitude toward self) did not change over time as a result of interactions between attachment styles, condition, and time.

Unforgiveness of Self and Partner

No significant three-way interactions were found between groups in unforgiveness toward self or ex-partner. Scores in retribution and avoidance motivations towards self (i.e., unforgiveness of self) and revenge and avoidance motivations towards ex-partner (i.e., unforgiveness of ex-partner) did not change over time as a result of interactions between attachment styles, condition, and time.
Forgiveness of Self and Partner

No significant three-way interactions were found between groups in forgiveness of self or ex-partner. Scores for forgiveness of self (i.e., a single, face-valid item of self-forgiveness and a scale of self-forgiveness) and scores for forgiveness of partner (i.e., a single, face-valid item of forgiveness and a scale of conciliatory motivations) did not change over time as a result of interactions between attachment styles, condition, and time.

Overall Effect of Attachment Styles on Intervention Outcome

When the aforementioned constructs are considered as a whole, it does not appear the attachment style (as determined by participants’ responses on the RQ) influenced the outcome of the intervention in a significant way. This may be largely due to the online nature of the study or the low number of participants who were eligible for final analysis at the end of time 3 (see Figure 2 for attrition information for this study). I will address these potential concerns in the limitations section below and, as such, will simply refer the reader to that section.

Change in Response to Treatment Conditions over Time Measurements

Relationship Variables

There was a significant two-way interaction effect in scores of emotional response to own transgression. Further investigation of this finding revealed that both immediate treatment and waiting list groups decreased anger at self over the three measurement periods. However, the differences between groups were not statistically significant. We can assume, then, that participants did not change anger at self as a result of participation in the
intervention. Scores in anger at self did not change over time as a result of an interaction between condition and time.

**Individual Variables**

No significant two-way interaction was found between groups in *negative general affect*. Scores in shame and guilt did not change over time as a result of an interaction between condition and time. There were no changes over time in these variables, and thus the self-forgiveness intervention did not seem to have an effect.

**Attitudes Toward Self**

No significant two-way interaction was found between groups in *positive attitudes toward self*. Scores in state general self-esteem and self-kindness did not change over time as a result of an interaction between condition and time. There were no changes over time in these variables, and thus the self-forgiveness intervention did not seem to have an effect. There was, however, a significant two-way interaction effect in scores of *negative attitude toward self*. Further investigation of this revealed that both treatment groups decreased judgment of self over the three measurement periods. Unfortunately, the differences between groups were not statistically significant. We can assume then that participants did not decrease self-judgment as a result of participation in the intervention. Scores in self-judgment did not change over time as a result of an interaction between condition and time.

**Unforgiveness of Self and Partner**

No significant two-way interaction effects were found between groups in *unforgiveness toward self* or *ex-partner*. Scores in retribution and avoidance motivations toward self (i.e., unforgiveness of self) and revenge and avoidance motivations towards ex-
partner (i.e., unforgiveness of ex-partner) did not change over time as a result of an interaction between condition and time.

**Forgiveness of Self and Partner**

There was not a significant two-way interaction effect found between groups in forgiveness of ex-partner. Scores on a single item of forgiveness of ex-partner and in conciliatory motivations towards ex-partner (i.e., forgiveness of ex-partner) did not change over time as a result of an interaction between condition and time.

A significant two-way interaction was found between groups in forgiveness of self. Further investigation of this revealed that both treatment groups increased scores on a face-valid single item measuring self-forgiveness over the three measurement periods. As expected, the intervention was effective in increasing self-forgiveness based on treatment condition. Treatment condition groups were not statistically different from each other at times 1 or 3, but the participants in the Immediate Treatment condition reported significantly greater self-forgiveness at time 2, after going through the self-forgiveness intervention, than did participants in the Waitlist Treatment at time 2, who had not yet gone through the self-forgiveness intervention. As the difference in treatment condition group scores at time 2 disappears at time 3, we can assume that the participants in the Waitlist Treatment condition also improved in self-forgiveness after going through the self-forgiveness intervention. What is especially promising is the maintenance in self-forgiveness that the Immediate Treatment participants showed even two weeks after their participation in the self-forgiveness intervention. As the current study did not follow Waitlist Treatment participants two weeks after the intervention I cannot say for sure if they also would have maintained their gains, although I am hopeful they would based on the Immediate Treatment data.
Overall Effect of Intervention

When each of the constructs is considered, it appears the intervention, in large, did not stimulate significant change in participants. Of note, however, there was a significant finding in participants’ reported levels of self-forgiveness as measured by a single face-valid item (SIF-Self). Though it could be argued that lack of robustness of the measure may decrease the value of this finding, it does indicate that the self-forgiveness intervention did indeed do what it was primarily designed to do. That is, the self-forgiveness intervention may have promoted self-forgiveness in participants who had recently gone through a breakup.

Limitations of the Current Study

The first and arguably the most prevalent limitation of the current research is the online nature of the intervention and data collection. The findings of the current research, however, are to be interpreted with some degree of caution as this experiment demonstrated an unusually high attrition rate of participants in all conditions. Whereas over 100 participants were assigned to both immediate treatment ($n = 105$) and waitlist control ($n = 104$) conditions, less than 20 completed either condition and were subsequently viable for analysis. That is, 10 participants in the waitlist condition and 15 participants in the treatment condition (or 9.5% and 14.4% respectively) completed the study from those that were signed up and sent the T1 questionnaire packet. (See Figure 2 for a detailed description of the attrition rate in the current experiment.) Because such a large percentage of participants were lost to follow-up or failed to complete questionnaire packets, the participants readily available for the final analysis were dramatically reduced.

There could be a large array of reasons behind this high attrition rate. I speculate the high level of attrition in the current study is due largely to the online nature of its design. The
effectiveness of online interventions is an area of some debate (Pahwa & Schoech, 2008). Because participants were completing the study online, they likely felt a lack of accountability as is common with online studies (Payne et al., 2009; Robinson & Hullinger, 2008). That is, because they felt more anonymous, they may have felt less obligated and less motivated to complete the questionnaires which they may have perceived as cumbersome. Likewise, as they were likely at home when they were completing the intervention, and as there would be no negative consequences for their dropping the study, they may have felt they may have been more apt to use their time in pursuit of leisure activities.

Similarly, conducting an online intervention creates additional potential limitations to the current research. The nature of the online intervention also lacks a so-called curative factor (Yalom, 2005). That is, the nature of an in-person group intervention has the benefits of instillation of hope, universality, imparting of information, altruism, corrective recapitulation, developmental socializing, imitative behavior, catharsis, existential factors, direct advice, and interpersonal learning all which have been established by Yalom (2005) as dramatically improving the effectiveness of an intervention. An online study also introduces a significant amount of unknowns into participant behavior. That is, it is impossible to determine what the participants were doing while completing the intervention, how thoroughly they read the information, or how carefully they conducted the exercises in the intervention itself. While this would be of less concern with a large sample size, the reduced sample size of the current research makes this a noteworthy limitation, and is difficult to avoid with online interventions.

Furthermore, the limited sample size may also lead to concerns over the generalizability of the results due to the lack of diversity inherent in small sample sizes.
Several conditions in the current research had a single individual of a given ethnicity representing an attachment style. For example, by the final analysis, a single Latina remained in the dismissive attachment style group. Clearly, it would be impossible for this single individual to represent all Latina women who have this attachment style. This obviously makes any meaningful comparison of differences between ethnicities impossible.

Another limitation of the current study could be the information obtained regarding commitment or relationship severity. The current study simply asked participants whether they had recently ended a romantic relationship, but did not carefully assess the significance of the partner to the participant. That is, it is feasible that a participant who was very close to her partner and had a deep and meaningful relationship with her partner prior to breakup would be more concerned about her role in the dissolution of the relationship than would someone who was largely detached from her relationship or who had been drifting apart from her partner for weeks or months prior to the breakup. Similarly, it is feasible that a participant who was not as committed to her partner or as emotionally invested near the end of their relationship, would simply get over her role in the dissolution of the relationship without the need for an intervention. Though the current research was designed to explore the introduction of a self-forgiveness component in resolving feelings of self-unforgiveness, and subsequently such a detailed examination of the relationship was beyond the scope of the study, the addition of this information would have strengthened the study as a whole.

Finally, the design of the current study is that the final time is two weeks following the intervention (for the immediate treatment condition, and no two-week follow-up for the waitlist control condition). This means that no information was gathered to determine the prolonged effectiveness of the intervention. While the intervention appears to have been
successful in promoting self-forgiveness in some participants, the lack of an extended follow-up period makes it impossible to determine what happens to participants’ self-forgiveness over an extended amount of time. That is, it is possible that with time participants regress toward the mean. As this was an online intervention and, as previously stated, potentially less effective than an in vivo experience, participants may lose the gains they made in self-forgiveness and revert to their state prior to the intervention.

**Implications for Clinical Practice**

Though attachment style did not appear to contribute significantly to a participant’s propensity to forgive themselves for their role in a breakup, the intervention did appear to promote self-forgiveness in general. This may indicate that when addressing a population who has made negative self-appraisals as a result of their role in the dissolution of a romantic relationship, a self-forgiveness intervention such as the one promoted in the current research may improve an individual’s ability to forgive themselves and subsequently promote positive self-appraisals.

It is feasible that individuals who have recently gone through a divorce make similar negative self-appraisals about their role in the dissolution of their marriage (if on a potentially more significant level) as those who participated in this study. That is, individuals who recently have gone through a divorce may also experience self-unforgiveness for their role in the dissolution of the marriage and may likewise benefit from their participation in a self-forgiveness intervention such as the one promoted in this research.

For practicing therapists working with clients that have just recently been in a romantic relationship that is now dissolved, it would be important to keep in mind that during the first few weeks afterwards, clients may be internally focused on their own experience of
hurt or their anger with their former partners. They might not at that time be able to process or be willing to process more complicated emotions, such as depression or anxiety, or think positively about their former partners. These emotions might be amplified depending on the nature of the romantic relationship, the role that the client had in ending the relationship, and the length of the romantic relationship. It would be important at that time to create a more supportive therapeutic connection. Work with these clients would change as time passed, as these clients would be more willing to assign blame, and process other emotions toward themselves and their former partners. The therapeutic work would look differently, as therapists would probably need to change their role from supporter to gentle challenger. It would be important, as a therapist, to constantly check in on how the client is feeling about themselves and their partners, and any changes that occur.

**Future Research Directions**

Based on the comparisons to the studies mentioned above, there are several implications for research. Utilizing different kinds of populations would expand the study and add to the literature on forgiveness and attachment. For example, a similar study to the present one could be conducted with a population of people who are currently in relationships. Additionally, similar methods could be used on a population that is not currently in any kind of romantic relationship, but has not recently experienced a break-up. The comparison of all four populations (i.e., dating, married, recently broken up, single) would be interesting. Another implication is the use of different methods in studying forgiveness and attachment over time. Examining how people react to different kinds of offenses over time (not just a relationship break-up) would be an excellent study; this would address different kinds of reactions. Having people fill out questionnaires daily would
address the minute changes that people might feel on a day-to-day basis, that were not addressed in the current research. Additionally, the above comparison makes a case for more complex statistical procedures, such as structural equation modeling or hierarchical regression, which might give a more multi-dimensional picture of results.

Based on the limitations mentioned above, there are several implications that would build on this study. As the findings from this research do not currently generalize to populations outside of a university setting, future research should incorporate community populations of diverse ages, ethnicities, and sexual orientations. Doing so would create a rich picture of attachment and forgiveness dynamics occurring within diverse relationships. This research could be expanded by controlling for which role participants had in the break-up (i.e., person who decided to end the relationship, or person who was broken up with). This difference could be the source of many differences in negative emotions felt towards the self or partner, and any resiliency that they might show.

Further research should be done into how these processes work, as well as how they interact to create different pictures for different attachment styles. One of the most important implications for this study is how it can be used to help people in groups. Research should be done that uses interventions based on models of self and other taking place at several weeks after an emotional trauma, after participants have had time to process. Running these interventions in groups would take advantage of the benefits of therapy groups to help each other.

**Conclusion**

The physical and emotional health and well-being promoted by forgiveness is well documented (Berry & Worthington, 2001; McCullough et al., 2001; Worthington & Scherer,
2004), as is the emotional stress and negative self-appraisals associated with ending a romantic relationship (Ruvulo et al., 2001). Because an individual who recently dissolved a romantic relationship is likely to create negative self-appraisals, the creation and implementation of a self-forgiveness intervention geared specifically at romantic breakups - similar to the one proposed in this study - may be necessary. The online intervention proposed in the current study did, indeed, appear to promote self-forgiveness in this specific population. Though the participant pool in the current study was inadequate to demonstrate the important role attachment style plays in an individual’s propensity to make positive or negative self-appraisals after the dissolution of a romantic relationship, it likely still plays a valuable role in the self-forgiveness process that would be worthy of further attention in the future. In this respect, the current study plays a crucial role in paving the road for additional research endeavors exploring this complex phenomenon.
List of References
List of References


126


### Appendix A

#### Table Appendix-1

**Summary of empirical self-forgiveness literature**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Study</th>
<th>Participants</th>
<th>Design</th>
<th>Measures</th>
<th>Major Findings (Conclusions paraphrased from articles- be sure to cite)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Barber, Maltby, & Macaskill (2005) [mental health] | 200 university students       | Correlational study; multiple regression analyses | 1. Self and other subscales (6 items each, Likert scale) from Heartland Forgiveness Scale (HFS)  
2. Anger Rumination Scale- 19 items loading on 4 factors, Likert scale) measuring tendency to think about current anger provoking situations and recall angry episodes from past | 1. Forgiveness of self is neg corr with angry after-thoughts subscale, thoughts of revenge subscale, and angry memories subscale.  
2. *Anger memories accounts for unique variance in scores of self-forgiveness*  
3. Thoughts of revenge account for unique variance in forgiveness of others scores  
4. Dealing with revenge thoughts found to be crucial when exploring around forgiving another person. |
| Day & Maltby (2005) [mental health] | 176 university students       | Correlational study; multiple regression analyses | 1. HFS – all scales (18 items, Likert scale)  
2. Revised UCLA Social Loneliness Scale (10 items) measuring social loneliness | 1. Forgiveness of self and forg of others have neg corr with social loneliness  
2. *Forgiveness of self accounts for unique variance in social loneliness scores* (maybe ppl who cannot forg themselves withdraw from social relationships b/c they feel they are unworthy of forg; ppl who are lonely might feel they have fewer social relationships and then assign more importance to their own transgressions because they are unable to forgive themselves) |
black Christian individuals above age 65, considering religious faith to be important to their lives

analyses, data matrix organized responses of self-forgiveness into 3 reactions: cognitive, behavioral, emotional

1. Do you forgive yourself for the things you have done? 2. If not, why? 3. How does religion help you forgive yourself?

transgressions (minor vs major infractions, which need forgiveness more); changing evaluation standards (accepting own limitations); focusing on positive intentions (at time of transgression vs actual transgressions); acknowledging and learning from mistakes (taking responsibility for previous mistakes- making a plan for behavioral change central component)

2. Behavioral reactions: making reparations (express remorse, behavioral changes that compensate for transgression); reading Bible (perceive self-forg as spiritual growth by reading about forgiveness); praying for God’s forgiveness (belief in divine intervention → God forgives, diminishes critical self-eval, narrows gap b/t real and ideal self-schemas)

3. Emotional reactions: relief and wellbeing (behave & cog reactions contributed to revised understanding of self, diminishing ruminations); confusion and uncertainty (believe God had forgiven them, but still can’t forgive self); chronic guilt

4. People who were incapable of forgiving themselves were extremely self-critical

5. People at particular risk for mental health problems are those that feel that God had forgiven them but still were unable to forgive themselves

6. People who committed particularly hurtful transgressions were not able to forgive themselves → severity important

Fisher & Exline (2006) [mental health & personality]

138 undergraduates

Correlational study; series of multiple regression analyses

1. Transgression-specific measures: Researchers created items to assess self-directed negative emotions (remorse, self-condemnation); responsibility for offense; efforts to reduce negative emotions; repentant behaviors toward the offended person; humbling changes

1. Remorse is linked with willingness to humble self and repent for offense

2. Self-condemnation is associated with poor psychological well-being. (self-forg would require that people stop condemning themselves)

3. Prosocial behaviors associated with accepting responsibility for offense
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Leach &amp; Lark (2004) [personality]</th>
<th>137 undergraduates, 90% of whom are considered religious</th>
<th>Correlational study; hierarchical regression analyses</th>
<th>1. Bipolar Adjective Rating Scale (80 items) measuring major dimensions of personality- neuroticism, extraversion, openness, agreeableness, conscientiousness 2. The Forgiveness Scale (Mauger; 30 items) to assess forgiveness of others and forgiveness of self 3. Spiritual Transcendence Scale (24 items) with 3 subscales of Universality, prayer Fulfillment, and Connectedness 4. Spiritual Well-Being Scale (20 items)</th>
<th>1. Forgiveness of self negatively correlated with Neuroticism 2. Forgiveness of self positively correlated with Openness, Agreeableness, Conscientiousness, and Existential well-being 3. Neuroticism negatively predicts self-forgiveness 4. Openness positively predicts self-forgiveness 5. Spirituality does not predict self-forgiveness (spirituality predicts forgiveness of others though) <strong>Conclusions:</strong> forgiveness of self and forgiveness of others involves different motivations, therefore interventions should have different foci [Mauger’s intropunitive orientation, punish self]</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2. Situational context measures: Researchers created two items assessing extent of a) seriousness of offense, and b) how harmful offense was to offended person 3. Individual difference measures: TOSCA (Same and guilt); Researchers created two factors from specific measures: <strong>Well-being factor</strong> (self-esteem: Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale; Satisfaction with Life Scale; emotional stability: Big 5 scale; depression: Center for Epidemiological Studies Depression Scale; anxiety: Trait Anxiety Inventory; anger: Trait Anger Scale), and <strong>Egotism factor</strong> (psychological entitlement; narcissism: Narcissistic Personality Inventory; humility) 4. <strong>Trait Self-forgiveness measures:</strong> Forgiveness of Self scale (Mauger); HFS self-forgiveness subscale; Multidimensional Forgiveness Scale self-forgiveness portion (Tangney et al)</td>
<td>4. Participants were less likely to repent and to learn humbling lessons from their offenses if they shrugged off guilty feelings (if self-forg is to be genuine, transgressors need to take responsibility for transgressions) 5. People who are shame-prone or have other markers of low well-being (depression, anxiety, low self-esteem, low emotional stability) are especially likely to condemn themselves after a transgression 6. Egotism associated with reluctance to accept responsibility for offense</td>
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<tr>
<td>Study</td>
<td>Participants</td>
<td>Methodology</td>
<td>Measures</td>
<td>Findings</td>
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<td>Macaskill, Maltby, &amp; Day (2002) [self-forgiveness as a separate construct]</td>
<td>324 British undergraduates</td>
<td>Correlational study; independent group t-tests analyses</td>
<td>1. The Forgiveness Scale (Mauger; 30 items) to assess forgiveness of others and forgiveness of self 2. Emotional empathy</td>
<td>1. Women scored higher on emotional empathy 2. Both genders: people with higher levels of empathy more easily forgive others but no significant relationship between empathy and forgiveness of self</td>
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<tr>
<td>Maltby, Day, &amp; Barber (2004) [personality &amp; mental health]</td>
<td>320 British adults</td>
<td>Correlational study; factor analysis</td>
<td>1. Enright Forgiveness Scale (65 items) to measure 6 dimensions of forgiveness related to specific situation: negative affect, affective judgment, negative behavior, positive affect, positive judgment, positive behavior 2. Forgiveness Likelihood Scale (Rye et al., 2001; 10 items) measuring response to hypothetical situations 3. The Forgiveness Scale (Rye et al., 2001; 15 items) measuring positive and negative affective, cognitive, and behavioral responses to wrong-doing with 2 subscales: positive and negative forgiveness 4. HFS- Forg of self, forg of others subscales (6 items each) 5. Abbreviated Form of the Revised Eysenck Personality Questionnaire (18 items) measuring extraversion, neuroticism, and psychotics 6. COPE checklist (60 items) measuring ways of coping-15</td>
<td>1. Neuroticism coping factor loadings: likelihood of forgiveness, forg of self, forg of others &amp; forgiveness (absence of negative affect, cognitions, and behaviors) --&gt; Neurotic coping negatively correlated with depr, anxiety, somatic symptoms, social dysfunction, perceived stress, and negative affect. Positively correlated with positive affect &amp; life satisfaction 2. Presence of positive forgiveness affect, cognitions, and behaviors load onto Extraversion coping factor 3. People who are not forgiving can be described as anxious, worrying, moody personality traits, not likely to engage or acknowledge stressful events 4. Forgiveness of self loaded only on Neuroticism coping factor</td>
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<tr>
<td>Study</td>
<td>Sample Size</td>
<td>Methodology</td>
<td>Measures</td>
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</table>
| Maltby, Macaskill, & Day (2001) [personality and mental health]      | 324 undergraduates | Correlational study; Pearson Correlational analyses | 1. The Forgiveness Scale (Mauger; 30 items) to assess forgiveness of others and forgiveness of self  
2. Abbreviated Form of the Revised Eysenck Personality Questionnaire (18 items) measuring extraversion, neuroticism, and psychoticism  
3. General Health Questionnaire (28 items) measuring 3 subscales of depression, anxiety, social dysfunction, and somatic symptoms |

1. Failure to forgive self positively correlated with neuroticism, depression, and anxiety. |

| Romero, Kalidas, Elledge, Chang, Liscum, & Friedman (2006) [mental health] | 81 adult women receiving follow-up medical care for breast cancer at a medical oncology breast clinic in a county general hospital | Correlational study; multiple regression path analyses used to test mediational models | 1. Forgiveness of Self scale (Mauger; 15 items)  
2. Researchers created single item to assess spirituality (How spiritual do you consider yourself?)  
3. Short version of Profile of Mood States (37 items) to assess psychological distress  
4. Functional Assessment of Chronic Illness Therapy general version (27 items) to assess physical well-being, emotional well-being, social/family well-being, functional well-being (4 subscales) |

1. Negative relationship between quality of life and mood disturbance  
2. Self-forgiving attitude negatively correlated with mood disturbance; acted as unique predictor for mood disturbance  
3. Self-forgiving attitude positively correlated with quality of life; acted as unique predictor for quality of life  
4. No significant relationship between self-forgiving attitude and spirituality  

**Conclusions**: self-forgiveness significantly predicts psychological adjustment, as does spirituality, so either may be viable means of coping with breast cancer |

| Ross, Hertenstein, & Wrobel (2007) [personality and psychopathology] | 162 undergraduates | Correlational study; principal components analysis to confirm factor | 1. HFS (18 items)- self, others, situations subscales  
2. The Forgiveness Scale (Mauger; 30 items) to assess forgiveness of others and forgiveness of self |

1. Self-forgiveness scales loaded as expected (divergent from forg of others factor)  
2. Self-forgiveness negatively correlated with Anxious Cluster C (Avoidant, Dependent, and Obsessive-Compulsive), Paranoid, Schizotypal, |
| 1. HFS (18 items)- self, others, situations subscales | 1. Self-forg negatively correlated with Neuroticism domain (all facets) |
| 2. Forgiveness Likelihood Scale (Rye et al., 2001; 10 items) measuring response to hypothetical situations | 2. Self-forg positively correlated with Extraversion domain (Warmth, Gregariousness, and Positive Emotions facets) |
| 3. The Forgiveness Scale (Rye et al., 2001; 15 items) measuring positive and negative affective, cognitive, and behavioral responses to wrong-doing with 2 subscales: positive and negative forgiveness | 3. Self-forg positively correlated with Conscientiousness domain (Competence & Achievement facets) but negatively correlated with Order facet |
| 4. TNTF to measure dispositional forgiveness across situations (5 hypothetical situations) | 4. Positive correlations with Trust facet (Agreeableness) and Self-discipline facet (Striving domain) |
| 5. NEO-PI-R (240 items) assessing 5 basic personality domains and their 6 facet scales | 5. Negative correlation with Modesty facet (Agreeableness) |
| 6. SNAP (375 items) assessing traits deemed relevant to Personality Disorders (15 subscales loading on 3 factors: Negative Temperament, Positive Temperament, & Disinhibition) | 6. Depression (best) and Impulsiveness facets (Neuroticism) significant predictors of self-forgiveness |

Conclusions: Self-forgiveness and other forgiveness are largely independent factors. Neuroticism plays a big role in self-forgiveness (indicative of Mauger’s introspunitive style). Because Borderline had such a strong relationship with both self- and other-forgiveness, addressing self-forgiveness in victims of trauma is especially important.
**Conclusions**: People who lack emotional stability have the hardest times forgiving themselves (view themselves negatively, experience guilt and worthlessness associated with depression). These people tend to internalize negative emotions.

**THEORY**: Preoccupied attachment, who have negative feelings towards themselves, will find it harder to forgive themselves. Because forgiveness seems to be two distinct dimensions, perhaps people could be placed somewhere along those two dimensions, like attachment (e.g. More/less forg of self, and more/less forg of others).

| Snyder & Heinze (2005) [clinical?] | 79 undergraduates who indicated that they had been physically and/or sexually abused as children (younger than 15) | Correlational study; series of regression analyses to test mediation model | 1. Hostile Automatic Thoughts Scale (30 items) assessing how often they have had hostile thoughts involving physical aggression, derogation, and revenge.
2. HFS (18 items)- self, others, situations subscales
3. Revised Civilian Mississippi Scale for PTSD (MISS) assessing PTSD symptoms- 2 components: 1st asks about symptoms related to a specific event (answers yes/no), 2nd asks about feelings/behaviors not specifically related to the event.
4. Screening questionnaire administered before MISS altered to include childhood abuse | 1. Self-forg negatively correlated with hostile thoughts and PTSD symptoms.
2. Overall forgiveness played strong mediational role in relationship between PTSD symptoms and hostility.
3. *Forgiveness of self played mediational role in relationship between PTSD symptoms and hostility.*
4. Forgiveness of self had major mediational role in relationship between PTSD and hostility in sexual abuse survivors
5. Forgiveness of self had strong mediational role in relationship between PTSD and hostility in physical abuse survivors
6. Forgiveness of self had strong mediational role in relationship between PTSD and hostility in women (less strong for men)
7. Forgiveness of self and situations much stronger mediators than forgiveness of others

**Conclusions**: Substantial portion of relationship between PTSD symptoms and hostility is explained by levels of self-forgiveness; forgiveness plays “dampening role in the usual PTSD-hostility link” (p. 426). More important for abuse survivors to forgive themselves than their others are supported.
| Strelan (2007a) - The Prosocial, adaptive qualities of just world beliefs: Implications for the relationship between justice and forgiveness. [category???] | 275 undergraduates at a large Australian university | Correlational study; series of hierarchical regressions used to test mediational model (self-esteem mediates rel between just world beliefs and self-forg) | 1. Just World Scale (18 items) assessing general BJW and unjust world beliefs  
2. Personal Belief in a Just World (7 items) assessing personal BJW  
3. HFS - self and others  
4. Gratitude Questionnaire - 6 (6 items)  
5. RSE (10 items) assessing self-esteem | 1. Forgiveness of self positively correlated with general and personal BJW; forgiveness of others; gratitude; self-esteem.  
2. Self-esteem mediates relationship between general BJW and self-forgiveness; and between personal BJW and self-forgiveness  
**Conclusions:** People who believe the world is a just place are more likely to be kind to themselves following a transgression against the self and others. People who believe that good things happen to good people also have good self-esteem, and individuals with good self-esteem are more likely to be positively disposed towards themselves even if they transgress. As a transgression is a threat to BJW, people are likely to defend against that threat by responding in a way that is consistent with their beliefs about the world as a benevolent place. |
| Strelan (2007b). Who forgives others, themselves, and situations? The roles of narcissism, guilt, self-esteem, and agreeableness. [personality] | 176 undergraduates at a large Australian university | Correlational study; series of hierarchical regression analyses to test prediction and mediation models | 1. HFS (18 items) - self, others, situations subscales  
2. Narcissism Personality Inventory (40 items)  
3. RSE (10 items) assessing self-esteem  
4. Revised Harder Personal Feelings Questionnaire guilt and shame subscales assessing proneness to guilt and shame  
5. NEO Five Factor Inventory Agreeableness subscale (12 items) | 1. Forgiveness of self positively correlated with forgiveness of others; forgiveness of situations; narcissism; agreeableness; self-esteem  
2. Forgiveness of self negatively correlated with guilt and shame.  
3. Guilt has a unique association (negatively relation) with forgiveness of self.  
4. Both self-esteem and guilt act as mediators between narcissism and self-forgiveness.  
**Conclusions:** Related to faux self-forgiveness. People who experience combination of anxiety, tension, remorse, and regret in response to their wrongdoing may be more likely to punish themselves. Guilt is a barrier to self-forg but positive self-regard may by key to self-forg. Narcissists (high positive self-regard and/or low sense of guilt) have an inflated sense of self, and may be unwilling to accept responsibility for hurting others --> their claim of being self- |
Thompson, Snyder, Hoffman, Michael, Rasmussen, Billings et al. (2005).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Study 1: 499 undergraduates at large Midwestern university</th>
<th>Validation study; exploratory factor analysis</th>
<th>Pilot HFS (90 items)</th>
<th>Three factor model of forgiveness supported- self, others, situations.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Study 2: 1,111 undergraduates</td>
<td>Validation study; descriptive statistics, internal reliabilities, and subscale intercorrelations obtained, confirmatory factor analysis</td>
<td>18 item HFS with 3 subscales for self, others, situations</td>
<td>Data support the notion that forgiveness and unforgiveness are complementary pieces of the same construct</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Study 3a: 504 undergraduates</td>
<td>Validation study; convergent and discriminant validity, internal consistency, and test-retest reliability</td>
<td>1. 18 item HFS 2. <em>Dispositional forgiveness</em>: The Forgiveness Scale (Mauger; 30 items) to assess forgiveness of others and forgiveness of self; Multidimensional Forgiveness Scale (16 hypothetical situations; Tangney et al) assessing propensity to forgive others, forgive self, and ask for forgiveness from others- subscales Propensity to Forgive Self and Propensity to Forgive Others used; Willingness to Forgive Scale (15 hypothetical scenarios) 3. <em>Nondispositional forgiveness</em>: Enright Forgiveness Inventory (60 items); TRIM (12 items); Interpersonal Relationship Resolution Scale forgiveness subscale (22 items) 4. Positive correlations with forgiveness: Cognitive Flexibility</td>
<td>1. Cronbach’s α acceptable. 2. Acceptable test-retest reliability. 3. HFS displayed stronger relationships to dispositional forgiveness than to Nondispositional measures. 4. Expected relationships with nonforgiveness measures.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Study 3b: see above 3a</td>
<td>Correlational study; series of hierarchical regression analyses</td>
<td>1. 18 item HFS 2. Trait Anger Scale (15 items) 3. State-Trait Anxiety Inventory (20 items) 4. Center for Epidemiological Center Depression Scale (20 items) 5. Satisfaction with Life Scale (5 items)</td>
<td>1. Self-forgiveness has negative correlations with depression, anger, and anxiety. 2. Self-forgiveness has positive correlation with satisfaction with life. 3. Forgiveness of self accounts for unique variance in depression, anxiety, and satisfaction with life (but not anger). <strong>Conclusions</strong>: Forgiveness of self is strongly related to aspects of mental health (like depression, anxiety, and anger)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Study 4: 123 adults recruited via random selection using phone book in a large Midwestern city. 2nd administration = 57 people</td>
<td>Correlational study; series of hierarchical regression analyses</td>
<td>1. 18 item HFS 2. Hostile Automatic Thoughts Scale (30 items) assessing how often they have had hostile thoughts involving physical aggression, derogation, and revenge. 3. Hope Scale (12 items) 4. Relationship Assessment Scale (7 items) assessing relationship satisfaction 5. Dyadic Trust Scale (8 items) assessing belief in the honesty and benevolence of a relationship partner</td>
<td>1. Total forgiveness and hostile thinking demonstrated equal, although inverse, associations with relationship duration. 2. Forgiveness accounted for unique variance in relationship satisfaction, even when controlling for trust. <strong>Conclusions</strong>: These factors may play a role in the maintenance of romantic relationships.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Study</td>
<td>Participants</td>
<td>Methodology</td>
<td>Measures</td>
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<tr>
<td>Study 5: 55 undergraduates</td>
<td>Correlational study; multiple regression and series of hierarchical regressions</td>
<td>1. 18 item HFS 2. Hope Scale (12 items) 3. Beck Depression Inventory (21 items) 4. Researchers created questionnaire asking participants to record statements from audiotapes that they could remember</td>
<td>1. HFS positively correlated with time listening to forgiving statements, total forgiving statements recalled, hope, and positive affect. 2. HFS negatively correlated with unforgiving statements recalled, depression, and negative affect.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Study 6: 230 undergraduates</td>
<td>Correlational study; narratives coded qualitatively by raters for valance (positive or negative) and strength</td>
<td>1. 18 item HFS 2. Participants wrote 3 narratives (focus on self, other, situations) in which they described how they currently thought, felt, and talked about those transgressions</td>
<td>1. Participants’ past statements were overwhelmingly negative, regardless of forgiveness level 2. Participants with higher forgiveness levels had fewer statements coded as negative in the past versus the present than did people with lower forgiveness levels.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Walker &amp; Gorsuch (2002) [personality]</td>
<td>Correlational study; series of hierarchical regressions analyses</td>
<td>1. Goldberg’s personality scale (165 items that can be scored for both the Big 5 as well as the 16 factors 2. Forgiveness of others: of friends, romantic partners, and parents scales (15 items total; from McCullough et al 1997) 3. Receiving forgiveness: 5 items from McCullough et al., 1997 4. Forgiveness of self: researchers created 4 items 5. Receiving God’s forgiveness: researchers created 4 items</td>
<td>1. Forgiveness of self positively correlated with emotional stability, emotionality, friendliness, assertiveness, and intellect. 2. Forgiveness of self negatively correlated with religion, anxiety 3. 16 factor model of personality predicted self-forgiveness over and above Big 5.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Study</td>
<td>Sample Characteristics</td>
<td>Methodology</td>
<td>Measures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Webb, Robinson, Brower, &amp; Zucker (2006) [clinical]</td>
<td>157 adults with alcohol use disorders entering a community-based substance abuse treatment center in Midwest</td>
<td>Correlational study; paired sample t-tests, bivariate correlations, and series of hierarchical and logistical regression analyses</td>
<td>1. 3 items from Brief Multidimensional Measure of Religiousness/Spirituality (BMMRS) (40 items): ForSelf, ForOthers, ByGod. 2. Loving and Controlling God Scales (10 items)- 2 scales 3. Daily Spiritual Experiences Scale (16 items) assessing connection with transcendent, sense of love and comfort from the transcendent, sense of wholeness and awe, longing for the transcendent. 4. BMMRS subscale (6 items) assessing religious and spiritual meaning, values, and beliefs 5. Religious Background and Behavior Questionnaire subscales (12 items) assessing religious practices within the previous year and lifetime religious practices 6. Researchers created single items assessing belief in God and practice of religion 7. Positive and negative religious coping assessed with items from the BriefRCope and the BMMRS 8. Purpose in Life (20 items) 9. Short Index of Problems (15 items) assessed alcohol problems 10. Timeline Follow-Back interview assessed quantity and frequency of alcohol use</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zechmeister &amp; Romero (2002) [category???]</td>
<td>122 friends, family members, and co-workers</td>
<td>Experimental study (participants)</td>
<td>1. Interpersonal Reactivity Index (28 items) assessing empathy 2. Participants wrote narratives</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
of undergraduates randomly assigned to 1 of 4 narrative pairings); coders rated presence or absences of offense severity, blameworthiness, self-threat, time frame, consequences, intentions, affective responses, empathy, and forgiveness; 2x2x2 chi-square analyses examined differences in narratives a function of victim vs. offender role, forgiven vs. not forgiven events, and the presence or absences of coded features.

describing an incident where they were the offender or victim of an offense that was either forgiven or not forgiven

2. Offenders who did not forgiven themselves reported more regret, self-blame, and guilt.
3. Offenders who forgave themselves implicated the victim in sharing the blame for the offense.
4. Offenders who forgave themselves were more likely to mention an apology and making amends.
5. Offenders who did not forgive themselves demonstrated more emotional concern for their victims, as well as more personal distress as a result of thing about their victims.

**Conclusions:** Empathy for their victim’s experience may make offenders’ self-forgiveness more difficult. Perceptions of offenses depend on both a person’s role as victim or offender and whether there was forgiveness or not. An obstacle to self-forgiveness is feelings of distress and shame about oneself, rather than guilt for the offending party. Interventions should focus on offender’s responsibility and empathy for the victim without shaming offender.
Appendix B
Demographics Questionnaire

1. What is your age?  

2. What is your gender?
   a. Female
   b. Male
   c. Transgender

3. What is your sexual orientation? If other, please specify below.
   a. Heterosexual
   b. Lesbian
   c. Gay
   d. Bisexual
   e. Other: Please specify ______________________

4. What is your ethnicity? Please circle one.
   a. White/European American  
   b. Black/ African American
   c. Latino/a  
   d. Asian American  
   e. Native American
   f. Pacific Asian  
   g. Middle Eastern/Arabic  
   h. Indian/South Asian
   i. Other: ________________________________

5. What is the highest level of education that you have received?
a. 12th grade
b. Some college
c. Associate’s degree
d. Bachelor’s degree
e. Professional degree
f. Master’s degree
g. Doctorate degree

6. How many times have you been married? ____________

7. How many children do you have? ________________
Appendix C

Relationship Information

Directions: Please type your ex-partner's initials here. On this page, as we ask you about your relationship, please answer the questions with this specific person in mind.

1. What was your ex-partner’s gender?
   a. Female
   b. Male
   c. Transgender

2. How long, in years or months, did this relationship with your ex-partner last?
   a. Years ___________
   b. Months __________

3. At the time of the breakup, how committed to your partner were you? Please use the following scale: 1 = Not at all committed; 10 = Totally committed. ___________

4. What is the most committed you ever felt towards your partner? Please use the following scale: 1 = Not at all committed; 10 = Totally committed ___________

5. How long has it been, in months, since the breakup with your ex-partner? ______

6. Are you currently in a romantic relationship?
   a. Yes
   b. No
   c. 

7. In this packet of questionnaires, we will often ask you about YOUR EX-PARTNER'S PART IN THE BREAKUP, also called his/her TRANSGRESSIONS. In the space below, please briefly DESCRIBE HOW YOUR EX-PARTNER CONTRIBUTED TO THE BREAKUP. In the questions that follow, when we ask about your ex-partner’s part or contribution in the breakup, please refer to what you write below.

8. In this packet of questionnaires, we will often ask you about YOUR OWN PART IN THE BREAKUP, also called YOUR TRANSGRESSIONS. In the space below,
please briefly DESCRIBE HOW YOU CONTRIBUTED TO THE BREAKUP. In the questions that follow, when we ask about your own part or contribution in the breakup, please refer to what you write below.
Most people have disagreements in their relationships. Please indicate below the approximate extent of agreement or disagreement between you and your partner while you were in the relationship for each item based on the following scales:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Always agree</th>
<th>Always disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Philosophy of life</td>
<td>5 4 3 2 1 0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Aims, goals, and things believed important</td>
<td>5 4 3 2 1 0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Amount of time spent together</td>
<td>5 4 3 2 1 0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Have a stimulating exchange of ideas</td>
<td>5 4 3 2 1 0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Calmly discuss something</td>
<td>5 4 3 2 1 0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Work together on a project</td>
<td>5 4 3 2 1 0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

7. The choices below represent different degrees of happiness in your relationship. The middle point, “happy,” represents the degree of happiness of most relationships. Please choose the label that best described the degree of happiness, all things considered, while you were in the relationship.

<p>| | | | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>Extremely Unhappy</td>
<td>Fairly Unhappy</td>
<td>A little Unhappy</td>
<td>Happy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Unhappy</td>
<td>Unhappy</td>
<td>Unhappy</td>
<td>Very Happy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Unhappy</td>
<td>Unhappy</td>
<td>Unhappy</td>
<td>Extremely Happy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Unhappy</td>
<td>Unhappy</td>
<td>Unhappy</td>
<td>Perfect</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Unhappy</td>
<td>Unhappy</td>
<td>Unhappy</td>
<td>Happy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Unhappy</td>
<td>Unhappy</td>
<td>Unhappy</td>
<td>Very Happy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Unhappy</td>
<td>Unhappy</td>
<td>Unhappy</td>
<td>Extremely Happy</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix E

SAS-S

DIRECTIONS: Think about your actions (transgressions) that contributed to your break-up, which you have already described. As you think about your actions, please answer the following questions about the intensity of your feelings toward YOURSELF right now. We do not want your ratings of your past feelings, but your rating of feelings RIGHT NOW as you think about this event, and all that has happened since.

1 = Not at all
2 = Somewhat
3 = Moderately so
4 = Very much so

1. ___ I am mad.
2. ___ I feel angry.
3. ___ I am burned up.
4. ___ I feel like I’m about to explode.
5. ___ I feel like banging on the table.
6. ___ I feel like yelling at somebody.
7. ___ I feel like swearing.
8. ___ I am furious.
9. ___ I feel like hitting someone.
10. ___ I feel like breaking things.
Appendix F

R-7

Directions: This is a questionnaire designed to measure the feelings of regret you have at the present time for YOUR PART in your break-up. Thinking about these transgressions, read each item below and indicate the extent to which you have REGRET RIGHT NOW, using the following scale: 1 = No Regret; 10 = Extreme regret

0    1     2     3     4     5     6     7     8     9     10
No regret          Extreme regret

When you look back on your part in the break-up, to what extent do you currently...

1. _____ Wish that you had acted differently.
2. _____ Believe you made a good decision (reverse scored).
3. _____ Have regrets about your actions.
4. _____ Feel satisfied with your actions (reverse scored).
5. _____ Question whether you made the right actions.
6. _____ Think you might have made a bad decision.
7. _____ What is your overall level of regret for your actions contributing to your breakup?
Appendix G

PANAS

Instructions: This scale consists of a number of words that describe different feelings and emotions. Read each item and then mark the appropriate answer in the space next to that word. Indicate to what extent you have experienced each emotion IN GENERAL, that is, on the average. Use the scale below to record your answers.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Very</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>or not at all</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>interested (P)</td>
<td>___</td>
<td>___</td>
<td>___</td>
<td>___</td>
<td>___</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>distressed (N)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>___</td>
<td>___</td>
<td>___</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>excited (P)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>___</td>
<td>___</td>
<td>___</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>upset (N)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>___</td>
<td>___</td>
<td>___</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>strong (P)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>___</td>
<td>___</td>
<td>___</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>guilty (N)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>___</td>
<td>___</td>
<td>___</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>scared (N)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>___</td>
<td>___</td>
<td>___</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hostile (N)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>___</td>
<td>___</td>
<td>___</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>enthusiastic (P)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>___</td>
<td>___</td>
<td>___</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>proud (P)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>___</td>
<td>___</td>
<td>___</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

_____ 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)
Appendix H

PFQ2

Instructions: Below is a list of feelings that people sometimes have. Read each one carefully, and select one of the numbered descriptors that best describes HOW COMMON the feeling is for you.

0 = means that you never experience the feeling
1 = means that you rarely experience the feeling
2 = means that you sometimes experience the feeling
3 = means that you FREQUENTLY experience the feeling
4 = means that you continuously or almost continuously experience the feeling

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Feeling</th>
<th>0</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Embarrassment (S)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Mild guilt (G)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Feeling ridiculous (S)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Worry about hurting or injuring someone (G)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Sadness</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Self-consciousness (S)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Feeling humiliated (S)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>Intense guilt (G)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>Euphoria</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>Feeling “stupid” (S)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.</td>
<td>Regret (G)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.</td>
<td>Feeling childish (S)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13.</td>
<td>Mild happiness</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14.</td>
<td>Feeling helpless, paralyzed (S)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15.</td>
<td>Depression</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16.</td>
<td>Feelings of blushing (S)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17.</td>
<td>Feeling you deserve criticism for what you did (G)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18.</td>
<td>Feeling laughable (S)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question</td>
<td>Scale</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-------</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19. Rage</td>
<td>0 1 2 3 4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20. Enjoyment</td>
<td>0 1 2 3 4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21. Feeling disgusting to others (S)</td>
<td>0 1 2 3 4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22. Remorse (G)</td>
<td>0 1 2 3 4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

S = Shame  G = Guilt
Instructions: Please read each description carefully and think of yourself and how you generally relate to others in relationships. Indicate which description best explains you by checking the space to the left.

1. It is easy for me to become emotionally close to others. I am comfortable depending on others and having others depend on me. I don’t worry about being alone or having others not accept me.

2. I am comfortable without close emotional relationships. It is very important to me to feel independent and self-sufficient, and I prefer not to depend on others or have others depend on me.

3. I want to be completely emotionally intimate with others, but I often find that others are reluctant to get as close as I would like. I am uncomfortable being without close relationships, but I sometimes worry that others don’t value me as much as I value them.

4. I am uncomfortable getting close to others. I want emotionally close relationships, but I find it difficult to trust others completely, or to depend on them. I worry that I will be hurt if I allow myself to become too close to others.
Appendix J

TFS

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

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

Scoring: To score the TFS such that higher scores reflect higher trait forgivingness, first reverse score items 1, 3, 6, 7, and 8. Then sum all 10 items for the TFS total score.
Appendix K

S-RSE

Directions: This is a questionnaire that is designed to measure your feelings towards yourself AT THE PRESENT TIME for YOUR PART in your break-up. Thinking about your part, read the list of statements below dealing with your feelings about yourself RIGHT NOW. If you Strongly Agree with the statement, select Strongly Agree. If you Agree with the statement, select Agree and so on.

AT THIS MOMENT…

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. I feel that I’m a person of worth, at least on an equal plane with others.</td>
<td>SA</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. I feel that I have a number of good qualities.</td>
<td>SA</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. All in all, I am inclined to feel that I am a failure.</td>
<td>SA</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. I am able to do things as well as most other people.</td>
<td>SA</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. I feel I do not have much to be proud of.</td>
<td>SA</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. I take a positive attitude toward myself.</td>
<td>SA</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. On the whole, I am satisfied with myself.</td>
<td>SA</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. I wish I could have more respect for myself.</td>
<td>SA</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>D</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
9. I certainly feel useless at times.  SA  A  D  SD

10. At times I think I am no good at all.  SA  A  D  SD
Appendix L

SCS: How I Typically Act Toward Myself In Difficult Times

Please read each statement carefully before answering. To the left of each item, indicate how often you behave in the stated manner, using the following scale:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Almost never</th>
<th>Almost always</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. I’m disapproving and judgmental about my own flaws and inadequacies. (SJ-R)</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. When I’m feeling down I tend to obsess and fixate on everything that’s wrong.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. When things are going badly for me, I see the difficulties as part of life that everyone goes through.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. When I think about my inadequacies, it tends to make me feel more separate and cut off from the rest of the world.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. I try to be loving towards myself when I’m feeling emotional pain. (SK)</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. When I fail at something important to me I become consumed by feelings of inadequacy.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. When I’m down, I remind myself that there are lots of other people in the world feeling like I am.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. When times are really difficult, I tend to be tough on myself. (SJ-R)</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. When something upsets me I try to keep my emotions in balance.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. When I feel inadequate in some way, I try to remind myself that feelings of inadequacy are shared by most people.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
11. I’m intolerant and impatient towards those aspects of my personality I don’t like. (SJ-R) 1 2 3 4 5

12. When I’m going through a very hard time, I give myself the caring and tenderness I need. (SK) 1 2 3 4 5

13. When I’m feeling down, I tend to feel like most other people are probably happier than I am. 1 2 3 4 5

14. When something painful happens I try to take a balanced view of the situation. 1 2 3 4 5

15. I try to see my failings as part of the human condition 1 2 3 4 5

16. When I see aspects of myself that I don’t like, I get down on myself. (SJ-R) 1 2 3 4 5

17. When I fail at something important to me I try to keep things in perspective. 1 2 3 4 5

18. When I’m really struggling, I tend to feel like other people must be having an easier time of it. 1 2 3 4 5

19. I’m kind to myself when I’m experiencing suffering. (SK) 1 2 3 4 5

20. When something upsets me I get carried away with my feelings. 1 2 3 4 5

21. I can be a bit cold-hearted towards myself when I'm experiencing suffering. (SJ-R) 1 2 3 4 5

22. When I'm feeling down I try to approach my feelings with curiosity and openness. 1 2 3 4 5

23. I’m tolerant of my own flaws and inadequacies. (SK) 1 2 3 4 5

24. When something painful happens I tend to blow the incident out of proportion. 1 2 3 4 5

25. When I fail at something that's important to me, I tend to feel alone in my failure. 1 2 3 4 5

26. I try to be understanding and patient towards those aspects of my personality I don't like. (SK) 1 2 3 4 5

**Coding Key:**

Self-Kindness Items: 5, 12, 19, 23, 26

Self-Judgment Items (reverse scored): 1, 8, 11, 16, 21

Common Humanity Items: 3, 7, 10, 15

Isolation Items (reverse scored): 4, 13, 18, 25

Mindfulness Items: 9, 14, 17, 22
Over-identified Items (reverse scored): 2, 6, 20, 24

To compute a total self-compassion score, take the mean of each subscale, then compute a total mean. Higher scores mean more self-compassion.
Appendix M

Forgiveness Instruments

(McCullough & Hoyt, 2002; Berry et al., 2001; Thompson et al., 2005)
DIRECTIONS: For the following questions, please indicate what you imagine your CURRENT THOUGHTS AND FEELINGS would be about YOUR FORMER PARTNER. Use the following scale to indicate your agreement or disagreement with each of the statements.

1 = strongly disagree
2 = mildly disagree
3 = agree and disagree equally
4 = mildly agree
5 = strongly agree

1. ___ I looked for the source of the problem and tried to correct it.

2. ___ I took steps toward reconciliation: wrote him/her, called him/her, expressed love, Showed concern, etc.

3. ___ I made an effort to be more friendly and concerned.

4. ___ I did my best to put aside the mistrust.

5 ___ I tried to make amends.

6. ___ I was willing to forget the past and concentrate on the present.
Overall, considering ALL the hurts or offenses in your relationship, indicate the degree to which you have FORGIVEN YOUR FORMER PARTNER for all those hurts or offenses. Check the number that best reflects your degree of forgiveness AT THE PRESENT MOMENT for all the hurts in your relationship.

0  1  2  3  4
No Forgiveness  Complete Forgiveness

Overall, considering ALL the hurts in your relationship, indicate the degree to which YOU HAVE FORGIVEN YOURSELF for the things you may have done to hurt or offend your former partner. Check the number that best reflects the degree of forgiveness you feel toward yourself AT THE PRESENT MOMENT for all the hurts in your relationship.

0  1  2  3  4
No Forgiveness  Complete Forgiveness
Instructions: In the course of our lives negative things may occur because of our own actions, the actions of others, or circumstance beyond our control. For some time after these events, we may have negative thoughts or feelings about ourselves, others, or the situation. Think about how you typically respond to such negative events. Next to each of the following items write the number (from the 7-point scale below) that best describes how you typically respond to the type of negative situation describes. There are no right or wrong answers. Please be as open as possible in your answers.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Almost always</th>
<th>More often</th>
<th>More often</th>
<th>Almost always</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>False of me</td>
<td>False of me</td>
<td>true of me</td>
<td>true of me</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. Although I feel bad at first when I mess up, over time I can give myself some slack.
2. I hold grudges against myself for negative things I’ve done.
3. Learning from bad things that I’ve done helps me get over them.
4. It is really hard for me to accept myself once I’ve messed up.
5. With time I am understanding of myself for mistakes I’ve made.
6. I don’t stop criticizing myself for negative thing I’ve felt, thought, said, or done.
Appendix N

Measures of unforgiveness

(McCullough et al., 1998; Revised TRIM for self, 2005)
Instructions: For the questions on this page, please indicate YOUR CURRENT THOUGHTS AND FEELINGS ABOUT YOUR FORMER RELATIONSHIP PARTNER.

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

_____ 1. I’ll make him/her pay. [R]
_____ 2. I wish that something bad would happen to him/her. [R]
_____ 3. I want him/her to get what he/she deserves. [R]
_____ 4. I’m going to get even. [R]
_____ 5. I want to see him/her hurt and miserable. [R]
_____ 6. I keep as much distance between us as possible. [A]
_____ 7. I live as if he/she doesn’t exist, isn’t around. [A]
_____ 8. I don’t trust him/her. [A]
_____ 9. I find it difficult to act warmly toward him/her. [A]
_____ 10. I avoid him/her. [A]
_____ 11. I cut off the relationship with him/her. [A]
_____ 12. I withdraw from him/her. [A]
Instructions: For the questions on this page, please indicate your CURRENT THOUGHTS AND FEELINGS ABOUT YOURSELF in your former relationship.

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

_____ 1. I’ll make myself pay for my actions. [R]
_____ 2. I wish that something bad would happen to me. [R]
_____ 3. I feel I should get what I deserve. [R]
_____ 4. I’m going to punish myself until my actions are erased. [R]
_____ 5. I should feel hurt and miserable. [R]
_____ 6. I try not to think about what I did as much as possible. [A]
_____ 7. I pretend that the “me” that committed the transgressions doesn’t exist. [A]
_____ 8. I don’t trust myself. [A]
_____ 9. I find it difficult to think warmly toward myself. [A]
_____ 10. I avoid thinking of my contributions to the breakup of my relationship. [A]
_____ 11. I no longer have a good relationship with myself. [A]
_____ 12. I feel out of touch with myself. [A]
Appendix O

RESEARCH SUBJECT INFORMATION AND CONSENT FORM

TITLE: Self-forgiveness Interventions for Women Experiencing a Breakup

VCU IRB NO.: HM 11814

This consent form may contain words that you do not understand. Please ask the study staff to explain any words that you do not clearly understand. You may take home and keep an unsigned copy of this consent form to think about or discuss with family or friends before making your decision.

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY
The purpose of this study is to find out how women experiencing a breakup respond to a self-help intervention focusing on forgiveness of self. You're being asked to participate in this study because you've recently experienced a breakup.

DESCRIPTION OF THE STUDY AND YOUR INVOLVEMENT
If you decide to be in this study, you will be asked to sign this consent after you've had all your questions answered & understand what will happen to you. You'll be asked to complete a series of surveys and questions about your former relationship, your emotional responses to the breakup, & your feelings toward yourself and your partner. You'll be asked to fill out the surveys 1-2 times before participating in the self-forgiveness intervention, & 2 weeks afterwards. This packet of questionnaires takes about 1 hour to complete.

RISKS AND DISCOMFORTS
There is little risk to taking part in this research. The most likely risk is that a question or some part of the self-forgiveness intervention may make you feel uncomfortable or upset. Several questions will ask about things that have happened in your relationship that may have been unpleasant. You don't have to answer any questions you don't want to talk about, & you may choose to leave the study at any time. If you become upset, you may contact the study staff and they will talk with you & can also provide the names of counselors to contact so you can get help in dealing with these issues.

BENEFITS
This self-forgiveness intervention is designed to increase positive feelings & decrease negative feelings toward yourself. There is a chance that you may not receive any direct benefit from this study. The information we learn from participants may help us to design better interventions for women experiencing breakups.

173
COSTS
There are no costs for participating in this study other than the time you'll spend filling out surveys.

ALTERNATIVES
Some people may not feel comfortable participating in this study. The alternative to your involvement in this psychoeducational workshop is to not participate in this study.

CONFIDENTIALITY
All of the information you provide will be kept private. We won't tell anyone the answers you give us; however, information from the study & consent form signed by you may be looked at or copied for research or legal purposes by VCU, and their Offices of Human Research Protections. All information that you provide will be coded with an identification number. Your name won't be used on any answer sheet or put together with any of the information you provide. The data collected will be kept in a locked filing cabinet behind locked doors. Electronic data will be kept in a password protected file. What we find from this study may be presented at meetings or published in papers, but your name will not be used in these presentations/papers.

VOLUNTARY PARTICIPATION AND WITHDRAWAL
You don't have to participate in this study. If you choose to participate, you may stop at any time without penalty. You may also choose not to answer particular questions that are asked.

QUESTIONS
If you have any questions, please contact the research coordinator Kathryn Campana (Counseling Psychology, VCU, Richmond, VA 23284; Phone: 804-314-6331; Email: campanakl@vcu.edu) or the primary investigator for the study (Counseling Psychology, VCU, Richmond, VA 23284; Phone: 804-828-1150; Email: eworth@vcu.edu).

If you have any questions about your rights as a participant in this study, you may contact:
Office for Research Subjects Protection
Virginia Commonwealth University
800 East Leigh Street, Suite 111
P.O. Box 980568
Richmond, VA 23298
Telephone: 804-828-0868

This research study is an expected part of the doctor/investigator’s professional activity as a VCU faculty member. Additionally, this study is being conducted as partial fulfillment of the Doctor of Philosophy degree by the graduate student.
CONSENT

I have been given the chance to read this consent form. I understand the information about
this study. Questions that I wanted to ask about the study have been answered. My signature
says that I am willing to participate in this study.

______________________________________________
Participant name printed

______________________________________________ _______________________
Participant signature          Date

______________________________________________ ________________________
Name of Person Conducting Informed Consent Discussion/Witness (Printed)

______________________________________________ ________________________
Signature of Person Conducting Informed Consent Discussion/Witness          Date

______________________________________________________________
Investigator signature (if different from above)            Date
Appendix P

Self-forgiveness Intervention Participant manual
Forgiving Yourself for Your Part in a Breakup
Participant manual
A Self-Forgiveness Intervention for Women Experiencing a Breakup

Kathryn L. Campana
Virginia Commonwealth University

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178
Section 1: Introduction to the Study

Hello and welcome to this at-home self-forgiveness workbook focusing on women’s experiences after a relationship break-up! The goal of this workbook is to foster self-forgiveness within yourself and reduce any feelings of guilt and shame you may be experiencing from your break-up. Using the techniques and skills presented in this manual, you will find out about and understand what holds you back from forgiving yourself, as well as learn some ways that you can start to forgive yourself. Everyone has things they feel guilt or shame about after a romantic relationship ends, so I think you’ll get a lot out of this workbook.

Please read this workbook carefully, as it contains instructions (written in bold italics), information for you to read and respond to, and questions (written in bold and highlighted in yellow). This workbook will take a few hours (spread out over two weeks) to complete. All information that you provide in this workbook and on the questionnaires will be coded with your identification number for the study, and will not be linked to identifying information about you.

During the first week of the study, you will complete the first half of the workbook electronically and send it to the study investigator. During the second week of the study, you will complete the second half of the workbook and send it back to the study investigator. When you are finished, you will be asked to complete another questionnaire like the one you completed when you first entered the study. It is important that you understand how to download an electronic attachment, fill in an electronic worksheet, save it to your computer, and attach the document to an email sent to the investigator.

We’ll also be double checking your contact information. It’s important that we get this correct, as we will be sending you the follow-up questionnaire packet in two weeks. Your contribution in answering our questions about this workbook will help us refine it and improve upon it, so we really appreciate you taking the time to participate in the research study and fill out all our questionnaires.
Section 2: Introduction to You

To get to know a little bit more about you, please share the following information. Please type the answers into the space available. Do not worry about there not being enough space to type all you want. This electronic form will expand to fit whatever you type.

1) A brief description of why you signed up for the workshop

2) A brief description of why you feel it is important to forgive yourself

3) One interesting thing about yourself
Section 3: Relaxation Exercise

Now that you’ve shared a bit more about yourself, we’ll start the workbook activities with a relaxation exercise. Please read the following excerpts and answer the questions below before beginning your relaxation breathing exercise.

### Deep Breathing Relaxation

The ability to relax is important in effectively managing stress and anxiety, as well as taking care of ourselves. When we feel stressed, our bodies react with what is called the “fight or flight” response. Our muscles become tense, our heart and respiration rates increase, and other physiological systems become taxed. Without the ability to relax, chronic stress or anxiety can lead to burnout, anger, irritability, depression, medical problems, and more. Allowing yourself to deeply relax is the exact opposite of the “fight or flight” response. The “relaxation response” (Benson, 1975) is the body’s ability to experience a decrease in heart rate, respiration rate, blood pressure, muscle tension, and oxygen consumption. There are many benefits to being able to induce the “relaxation response” in your own body. Some benefits include a reduction of generalized anxiety, prevention of cumulative stress, increased energy, improved concentration, reduction of some physical problems, and increased self-confidence (Bourne, 2000).”

Have you ever noticed how you breathe when you feel relaxed? Take a moment to notice how your body feels right now. Or think about how you breathe when you first wake up in the morning or just before you fall asleep. Breathing exercises can help you relax because they make your body feel like it does when you are already relaxed. Deep breathing is one of the best ways to lower stress in the body. This is because when you breathe deeply it sends a message to your brain to calm down and relax. The brain then sends this message to your body. Those things that happen when you are stressed, such as increased heart rate, fast breathing, and high blood pressure, all decrease as you breathe deeply to relax.

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1 Footnote: Excerpts taken from the following sources: Prentiss Price, Ph.D., reprinted from the Counseling and Career Development Center Georgia Southern University; Merrill Hayden , reprinted from WebMD (http://www.webmd.com/balance/stress-management/stress-management-breathing-exercises-for-relaxation)
Key points

- The way you breathe affects your whole body. Breathing exercises are a good way to relax, reduce tension, and relieve stress.
- Breathing exercises are easy to learn. You can do them whenever you want, and you don't need any special tools or equipment to do them.
- You can do different exercises to see which work best for you.

What does it mean to breathe to relax?

- The way you breathe affects your whole body. Full, deep breathing is a good way to reduce tension, feel relaxed, and reduce stress. When you are relaxed, your breathing tends to be slow and gentle. It can be shallow or deep. One of the ways breathing exercises help you feel relaxed is getting you to feel the way you do when you are already relaxed.
- There are different ways to breathe to relax. The methods described here focus only on breathing exercises. Other ways combine breathing with things like yoga, imagery, and meditation.

Why should you do breathing exercises?

- Breathing exercises may help you relax and feel better. When you are stressed, breathing exercises have health benefits such as lowering blood pressure, slowing a fast heart rate, making you sweat less, and helping with digestion.
- Breathing exercises are easy to do. You can do them on your own whenever you want. Breathing exercises don't take long to do and don't cost money. And you don't need any special tools or equipment to do breathing exercises.
Before you begin the exercises described below, take a moment to “tune into” your body. Answer the following questions in the space provided; do not worry about space, as the electronic form will expand to fit whatever you type in.

1. On a scale from 1-10, please check only one number that describes how relaxed you feel RIGHT NOW.

☐1  ☐2  ☐3  ☐4  ☐5  ☐6  ☐7  ☐8  ☐9  ☐10
Not at all relaxed  Fully relaxed

2. Typing into the space provided, please describe what you are aware of in your body right. For example, is there a tightness or soreness anywhere that you are aware of? Some people may be aware of an emotion, such as sadness or stress.

After answering the above questions, please read through the exercises below and practice for 5-10 minutes.
Basic breathing exercise: Belly Breathing
Belly breathing is easy to do and very relaxing. Try this basic exercise anytime you need to relax or relieve stress.

1. Sit in a comfortable position.
2. Put one hand on your belly just below your ribs and the other hand on your chest.
3. Take a deep breath in through your nose, and let your belly push your hand out. Your chest should not move.
4. Breathe out through pursed lips as if you were whistling. Feel the hand on your belly go in, and use it to push all the air out.
5. Do this breathing 3 to 10 times. Take your time with each breath.

Advanced breathing exercise: 4-7-8 Breathing
This exercise also uses belly breathing to help you relax. You can do this exercise either sitting or lying down.

1. To start, put one hand on your belly and the other on your chest as in the belly breathing exercise.
2. Take a deep, slow breath from your belly, and silently count to 4 as you breathe in.
3. Hold your breath, and silently count from 1 to 7.
4. Breathe out completely as you silently count from 1 to 8. Try to get all the air out of your lungs by the time you count to 8.
5. Repeat 3 to 7 times or until you feel calm.
Advanced breathing exercise: **Roll Breathing**

The object of roll breathing is to develop full use of your lungs and to focus on the rhythm of your breathing. You can do it in any position. But while you are learning, it is best to lie on your back with your knees bent.

1. Put your left hand on your belly and your right hand on your chest. Notice how your hands move as you breathe in and out.

2. Practice filling your lower lungs by breathing so that your "belly" (left) hand goes up when you inhale and your "chest" (right) hand remains still. Always breathe in through your nose and breathe out through your mouth. Do this 8 to 10 times.

3. When you have filled and emptied your lower lungs 8 to 10 times, add the second step to your breathing: Inhale first into your lower lungs as before, and then continue inhaling into your upper chest. As you do so, your right hand will rise and your left hand will fall a little as your belly falls.

4. As you exhale slowly through your mouth, make a quiet, whooshing sound as first your left hand and then your right hand fall. As you exhale, feel the tension leaving your body as you become more and more relaxed.

5. Practice breathing in and out in this way for 3 to 5 minutes. Notice that the movement of your belly and chest rises and falls like the motion of rolling waves.

Practice roll breathing daily for several weeks until you can do it almost anywhere. You can use it as an instant relaxation tool anytime you need one.

**Caution:** Some people get dizzy the first few times they try roll breathing. If you begin to breathe too fast or feel lightheaded, slow your breathing. Get up slowly.
After practicing the breathing exercises above for several minutes, take a moment to “tune into” your body. Answer the following questions in the space provided; do not worry about space, as the electronic form will expand to fit whatever you type in.

1. What is exercise did you like best, and why?

2. On a scale from 1-10, please check only one number that describes how relaxed you feel RIGHT NOW.

- 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
- Not at all relaxed
- Fully relaxed

3. Typing into the space provided, please describe what you are aware of in your body right. For example, is there a tightness or soreness anywhere that you are aware of? Some people may be aware of an emotion, such as sadness or stress.

4. What is different in your body now after practicing the deep breathing relaxation exercise?
Section 4: Defining self-condemnation, guilt, remorse, and forgiveness

When you were filling out our questionnaires, we asked you a lot of questions about shame and guilt and forgiveness. Let’s take a little time to flesh out exactly what those things mean. Please answer the following questions by typing into the space provided. Do not worry about space, as the electronic form will expand to fit whatever you type into it.

1. What are your definitions of self-condemnation?

2. Why is self-condemnation bad or unhealthy? How?

3. What is the difference between guilt and self-condemnation?

4. Is guilt a bad or unhealthy thing?

5. What is forgiveness?

6. Does forgiving mean forgetting?

7. What does self-forgiveness mean to you?

8. How can forgiving yourself help when it comes to recovering from a breakup?
Discussion of self-condemnation, guilt, remorse, and forgiveness

**Self-condemnation (or shame)** is a negative feeling we have towards ourselves when we feel that we have done something morally objectionable. Therefore, we feel that we are not living up to our own standards. That is, because we did these morally objectionable things, we are “bad people”. This is unhealthy because it may lead to poor self-esteem, low self-efficacy, depression and anxiety.

**Remorse (or guilt)**, though often enmeshed with self-condemnation, can actually have positive benefits. Primarily, remorse requires us to take responsibility for our actions and can then lead us to make amends with others we have wronged. Importantly, the underlying message for remorse is “I have done a bad thing,” unlike self-condemnation, where the underlying message is “I am a bad person.”

**Forgiveness**, generally defined, is replacing negative feelings(e.g., anger, shame, hatred, bitterness) toward others or yourself with more positive and constructive feelings (e.g., acceptance, responsibility, efficacy). It does not mean forgetting, which is essential for accepting responsibility for our actions. *By promoting self-*

1. How were your definitions of self-condemnation, remorse, and self-forgiveness different from the excerpts?

2. Given these definitions, how do you think self-forgiveness might change your experiences of self-condemnation or remorse?
Section 5: Illustration of Transgression and Possibility for Need of Self-Forgiveness

As you were filling out the initial questionnaires, we asked you to consider your specific contribution to the breakup, or your transgression within the relationship. Breakups get so messy sometimes because it's hardly ever just one person transgressing against the other, because we are human and often do imperfect things.

So think about your transgression that you identified in the questionnaires. However, even if we transgress in different ways, we end up feeling the same feelings as others. So someone that steps out of her relationship might have the same negative feelings about herself as a woman who constantly berated her partner. What often prevents us from forgiving ourselves is our self-condemnation. Please answer the following questions using the space provided.

1. What was your transgression, or offense, within the relationship? What was your part in the breakup? Please be as detailed as possible.
Section 6: The Problem of Self-Condemnation - Self-forgiveness assessment

As a reminder, self-condemnation is defined as those negative feelings we have towards ourselves when we feel that we have done something morally objectionable. We often feel that we are not living up to our own standards.

*Please answer the following questions in the space provided.*

1. How was your transgression against your own morals?

2. What kind of feelings do you have about your transgression? Some common feelings are self-condemnation and remorse, but there are often many feelings that women have after experiencing a breakup.

*Imagine the ruler below is a representation of how much self-forgiveness you feel right now. If someone felt very condemning towards themselves, they would not feel very forgiving of themselves, so they might say they are lower on a scale of 1-10 for forgiving themselves for their transgression. Right now, decide where you are on this scale. Check the box that most closely represents WHERE YOU ARE RIGHT NOW in forgiving yourself for your transgression within your relationship. Answer the questions below, typing into the space provided.*
### Self-Forgiveness Ruler

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No forgiveness</th>
<th>Complete Forgiveness</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>□1  □2  □3  □4  □5  □6  □7  □8  □9  □10</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. Why did you pick the spot on the ruler that you did?

2. What would two places **below** your current spot look like? How would you be thinking, feeling, and behaving if you were had rated your self-forgiveness two spots below?

3. What would two places **above** your current spot look like? How would your thoughts, feelings and actions be different than where you are now?

4. How would you know you had reached a higher spot?
Excellent! The goal of this workbook is not to achieve complete and total forgiveness, but rather reduce the amount of self-condemnation you feel. Our goal, here together, is to get you to move forward a few steps on the self-forgiveness ruler. That may not mean complete self-forgiveness, but it will mean less self-condemnation.
Section 7: The Problem of Self-Condemnation – Mandalas

In this next activity, you will create mandalas, a type of art. Please read the following explanation of mandalas, and on your own separate pieces of paper, create your own mandala. These will not be turned into the study investigator. After creating the first mandala, please answer the questions by typing into the space provided. Do not worry about space, as the electronic form will expand to fit whatever you type in.

Mandalas are often used in art therapy to explore how people feel. Mandalas are circular in design and are colored in any design, allowing you to access feelings that you cannot yet put words to. The Mandala (Sanskrit for “circle” or “completion”) has a long history and is recognized for its deep spiritual meaning and representation of wholeness.

Many people and cultures have vouched for the mandala’s intrinsic meaning. Buddhists, Tibetans, and Hindus have all derived meaning from the mandala and its captivating beauty. Psychoanalyst Carl Jung has called it “a representation of the unconscious self.” The mandala is widely recognized as a meaningful reflection of its creator. Mandala art therapy & healing can be a great source of reflection on one’s soul.

Again, there are no rules or constrictions with regard to mandala designs. You don’t have to use only circles, though your art should have some semblance of a circular design. Otherwise, you can do whatever strikes you. In fact, it’s encouraged to let your feelings inspire your mandala art and designs. The very nature of creating a mandala is therapeutic and symbolic. The shapes and colors you create in your mandala art therapy will reflect your inner self at the time of creation. “Your instinct and feeling should inspire and guide you through the process of creation. Ultimately, you will be creating a portrait of yourself as you are when creating the mandala. So, whatever you are feeling at that time, whatever emotions are coming through, will be represented in your mandala art therapy. Your finished mandala will represent and reflect who you were at the time of creation. If you want, you can give your mandala a title and date of creation.

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2 Excerpts taken from http://www.arttherapyblog.com
MANDALA 1: So, **THINKING ABOUT YOUR TRANGRESSION AND HOW IT MAKES YOU FEEL RIGHT NOW**, create an image that would convey that feeling on a piece of paper. Create your image in a circular shape. You can be as abstract or detailed as you want, as long as you are comfortable with what you draw. Take about 5 minutes. Once you’ve finished your mandala, take note of the colors you used. Recognize, maybe even write down, what the predominant colors are in your mandala. Also take note of the least-used colors. Now look at the images and shapes you’ve created. Take notice of any hard and soft lines, jagged or smooth edges. Are there any areas of high contrast? Note your feelings and/or memories when you think about the colors, shapes, images, and designs on your mandala. You should be able to make some connections between your mandala and the feelings and emotions that you experienced while creating it.

1. How does your mandala design represent where you are in how you feel about yourself and your transgression?

2. What are some of the feelings and memories you have as you think about the colors, shapes, images, and designs on your mandala?

MANDALA 2: *Now think about WHERE YOU WANT TO BE. What do you want to feel towards yourself? Take about 5 minutes and draw that.*

1. Explain how your second mandala represents how you want to feel toward yourself.
This is meant to be a very personal and introspective activity and process, so the results are bound to vary. Again, it’s important to recognize that your mandala is a symbol, a reflection, of who you were when you created it. Ideally, the process of creating the mandala results in some form of self-healing, self-expression, and/or self-exploration.
Section 8: Effects of Self-Condemnation

In this section, please read the excerpt below and complete the questions on self-condemnation. Use the space provided, but do not worry about taking up too much space. The electronic form will expand as you type.

There are many ways in which people deal with feelings of self-condemnation. Some of more healthy than others, but they are all valid ways in which to deal with these feelings. Some examples of how people have dealt with their feelings of self-condemnation are: accepting what they you done and moving on; excusing yourself; justifying your behavior; feeling that justice has been done because you have suffered enough; punishing yourself; avoiding thinking about the transgression; ruminating (thinking over and over again) about the transgression; forgiving yourself.

1. Using the examples listed above, and others that you may think of, how can you deal with your feelings of self-condemnation?

2. What have you, personally, tried in order to deal with your feelings of self-condemnation?

3. Listing again those ways that you have personally tried to deal with self-condemnation, please describe how each technique worked for you.

4. Out of these ways of dealing with self-condemnation, what would be the best way? Why?

As you can see, there are many ways to deal with self-condemnation. Some effective, some not. Self-forgiveness is just one way of dealing with self-condemnation.
Imagine you had to create a newspaper personal ad, or an internet personal ad, and all you could post was 5 values that define you. How would you choose to create a picture of yourself? In the space below write a personal ad that you feel adequately represents your top 5 values. Be sure to use “I” statements when composing the ad, and then answer the two questions below.

1. How would you choose to create a picture of yourself? List five values that define you. Be sure to use “I” statements (e.g., “I value humor in relationships,” or “I feel honesty is important.”)

   a.  
   b.  
   c.  
   d.  
   e.  

2. Which of the values you listed would you describe as being the most important to you? Why?

3. How have you demonstrated these values in your personal life?

4. What were the themes that you noticed in your personal ad?
Great. We’ve just spent some time talking about what your most salient values are. These values are how we identify ourselves and are what we want others to see when they look at us. Because these are our most important values, when they are violated we might feel ashamed and experience self-condemnation.

5. How has your transgression in the relationship and your part in the breakup violated these values?

Part 1 (sections 1-9) ended. Please save electronic form to your computer and send to researcher at: campanakl@vcu.edu.

Please begin Part II next week.
Section 10: Recalling the Hurt

Often our offenses or wrongs affect more than just ourselves. Our decisions can affect many people. What compounds feelings of self-condemnation and other negative feelings is that our transgressions contradict our values, so we find ourselves morally objectionable. To begin to resolve these complicated feelings effectively, we first need to spend some time recalling the hurt and how it influenced others as well as ourselves.

Because we don’t live in social bubbles, when we commit an offense we often hurt others besides ourselves. Take a look at the circle below. There are numbered layers within this circle. Imagine yourself at the center of the circle, at layer 1. Each layer represents the closeness of people around you, so that others who have been affected by your transgression. As you think about your wrongdoing, think about who else was affected by your offense, and how closely they were involved. These are the other people you will include in your circle. The more affected they were by your transgression, the closer to the center you should place them.

Now we would like you to share about the offense you’ve been thinking about in detail. In the space below the circles, type in the first names of those people who were affected by your transgression within the breakup, as well as how your offense affected that specific person. Remember, go into as much detail as possible when describing how your specific offense within the relationship and breakup affected each person.
1. In the space below, please list who has been affected by the offense, and how they were affected.

1. YOU. How did your own transgression/offense affect you?

2.

3.

4.

5.
2. What personal values of yours were involved in the offense you described above?

3. How important are those values to your self-concept?

4. What do you think would be necessary for you to actually grant yourself forgiveness?

5. In your estimation, how likely is it that these things will happen?
Section 11: Forgiving the Self

The negative feelings that we have towards ourselves weigh us down, so it might feel like we’re carrying stones of guilt, or shame, or self-condemnation around wherever we go. For this next activity, you’re going to have a chance to put that figurative stone down so it doesn’t weigh on you so much. For this activity, you are going to take both sides of your argument.

First, I want you to imagine that you have split into two selves- one that deserves forgiveness, and one that does not deserve forgiveness. In the spaces provided below, you will be addressing each side of yourself.

- Not deserving of forgiveness.
  
  o Address this self as if you were actually talking to her. Talk to your other self as if she deserves to feel the way that you do when you think about your transgression and how it makes you feel. In the space below, type in at least three (no more than five) REASONS WHY YOU SHOULD NOT FORGIVE YOURSELF for your transgressions within the relationship and breakup. (Example of how to write reasons: “You shouldn’t forgive yourself because...”)

    1.
    2.
    3.
    4.
    5.
• Deserving of forgiveness
  
  o Address this self while taking the opposite viewpoint. You are now going to respond to that other self, the one who told you why you should not forgive yourself. Take a minute or two to tell your other self why you SHOULD forgive yourself. In the space below, type in at least three (no more than five) REASONS WHY YOU SHOULD FORGIVE YOURSELF for your transgressions within the relationship and breakup. (Example of how to write reasons: “You should forgive yourself because...”)

  1.
  2.
  3.
  4.
  5.

Please answer the following questions using the space provided. Do not worry about space, as the electronic form will expand to fit whatever you type into it.

1. What was it like taking both sides?

2. What was it like to come up with reasons to forgive and not forgive yourself?
Wonderful! Now you’ve spent some time logically thinking about why you need to forgive yourself, and why you deserve to forgive yourself.

Now we’d like you to come up with a single word that reminds you of your offense. Using a non-permanent marker or pen, write this one word on your hand. In order to forgive yourself, you need to figuratively “wash your hands” of the offense. You have written the offense on your hand as a metaphor. Now, you should find a sink and literally wash your hands.

Please answer the following question, typing into the space provided below.

1. Did the transgression wash completely off or is it still visible?

You may have noticed that even though you’ve washed your hands of the offense, it’s still there. It’s not as clear, but it is certainly still there. This is also the case with forgiving yourself for your offense. You won’t get rid of it all at once, and it may take several washings, but if you keep working on forgiving yourself, eventually, you won’t see the offense anymore.
Forgiveness is similar to a graph with many highs and lows. Self-forgiveness is not a one-shot deal, but it is, instead, a process. Because self-forgiveness is a process, there will be times that you feel more forgiving or less forgiving of yourself for your offenses. Because how we feel about ourselves (and how likely we are to feel forgiving toward ourselves) may go up and down, it is important to deal with unforgiving emotions when they come up and accept ourselves as imperfect people who will make mistakes.
Please answer the following questions, typing into the space provided below.

1. In general, what are some strategies you can use to accept yourself as a human being who can fail, and will do imperfect things? (Examples: “Talk to someone who cares about me.” “Remember when someone else forgave me.” “Do something that makes me feel good about myself.”) List at least 8-10.
   a. 
   b. 
   c. 
   d. 
   e. 
   f. 
   g. 
   h. 
   i. 
   j. 

2. Are some of these ideas better for some times than other times? When would you want to use each strategy?

3. Pick three specific ways you can use to accept that you are an imperfect person who will make mistakes and that that is okay. These are the strategies you will use to hold onto your self-forgiveness when you feel less forgiving of yourself.
   a. 
   b. 
   c.
Section 13: Hold On to Self-Forgiveness

One way to hold onto forgiveness of ourselves is to frequently remind ourselves why we deserve forgiveness. Verbal affirmations of your intentions to forgive yourself can be helpful in reminding yourself why you deserve forgiveness. The best way to use verbal affirmations is to look at yourself in a mirror, and address yourself out loud, speaking to yourself. Some examples of verbal affirmations that you could say to yourself include:

“I am a person worthy of the same love and respect that I give to others. I am a human being and therefore I can stumble and fall, and fail at things. Sometimes I will not live up to my own standards. I am worthwhile, though flawed. I am worthwhile. I can accept myself as a flawed person.”

Now, try practicing these verbal affirmations. Looking at yourself in a mirror, say the above sentences to yourself. Please answer the question below by typing into the space provided.

1. What did it feel like to say these positive affirmations to yourself?

Another helpful way to remind yourself why you deserve forgiveness is to write a letter to yourself and read it every once in a while. When you are feeling less forgiving of yourself, it may be helpful to take this letter out and read it to yourself.

For this activity, you will write a letter to yourself, using the template provided below. In the blank spaces, type in your name, as well as an additional paragraph to personalize your letter.
Letter of Self-Forgiveness

I am a person who has – as all people have – committed offenses unto myself and others. Despite this, however, I am worthy of the same love and respect that I give to others. I am a human being and therefore I may stumble and fall, and fail at things. Sometimes I will not live up to my own standards. Yet, though flawed, I am worthwhile. I can accept myself as a flawed person.

On this day, I forgive myself for one occurrence when I stumbled and failed to live up to my own standards. I accept that because I am flawed, this will happen again, and yet I know that I am a worthwhile person and deserve forgiveness.

There will be times when I feel less forgiving of myself. When those times arise, I have strategies to deal with them and use them to hold onto my forgiveness and the positive feelings towards myself, because I am a worthwhile person and deserve forgiveness.

When I feel less forgiving of myself, I will hold onto forgiveness and positive feelings towards myself by [Fill in the blank part with what you have decided to do when you feel more guilt and shame, and less self-forgiveness.]

[Add your own personalized paragraph below. You may want to reflect on what you have learned in this workbook, discuss how your life may be different if you hold onto self-forgiveness, or give yourself a message of hope. There are no rules here, but be sure to make this letter your own. When you are done personalizing the letter, please initial and date it and print out a copy for yourself to remind yourself in the future of the things you talked about in this workbook.]

Initials of participant     Date
Congratulations!! If you’re ready now, we have one more activity to do. We’ve talked about committing to self-forgiveness and holding onto it when we feel less forgiving. Now it’s time to look at the last self-forgiveness ruler and assess ourselves again.

Imagine the ruler below is a representation of how much self-forgiveness you feel right now. If someone felt very condemning towards themselves, they would not feel very forgiving of themselves, so they might say they are lower on a scale of 1-10 for forgiving themselves for their transgression. Note what rating you gave yourself for your current self-forgiveness when you began this workbook (section 5). Right now, decide where you are committing to go in your process of self-forgiveness. You do not have to commit to total self-forgiveness; it may be more helpful to make a smaller goal that you can reach using the strategies discussed in this workbook.

Check the box that most closely represents WHERE YOU WANT TO BE in forgiving yourself for your transgression within your relationship. Answer the questions below, typing into the space provided.

Self-Forgiveness Ruler

No forgiveness Complete Forgiveness

☐ 1  ☐ 2  ☐ 3  ☐ 4  ☐ 5  ☐ 6  ☐ 7  ☐ 8  ☐ 9  ☐ 10
1. Why did you pick the spot on the ruler that you did?

2. What would two places below your current spot look like? How would you be thinking, feeling, and behaving if you were had rated your self-forgiveness two spots below?

3. What would two places above your current spot look like? How would your thoughts, feelings and actions be different than where you are now?

4. How would you know you had reached a higher spot?

5. What strategies are you going to use to get to the spot that you chose?
Section 15: What did you get out of this workbook?

*We are interested in your experience of this workbook and your process of self-forgiveness. Please answer the questions below, typing into the space provided. The electronic form will expand to fit whatever you type.*

1. What did you learn from going through the workbook?

2. What did you like best about the self-forgiveness workbook?

3. What topic would you like to learn more about?

Closing Reminders

- Please save this electronic form onto your computer and attach it to an email, sent to the research investigator at: campanakl@vcu.edu. You will receive an email confirming the receipt of this workbook.

- We’ll be sending out follow-up questionnaires in about two weeks.
Appendix Q

Debriefing Form: Self-forgiveness Interventions for Women Experiencing a Breakup

Thank you for your participation in this study investigating the efficacy of self-forgiveness intervention workshops for women experiencing a breakup. As you may know, a number of variables are thought to be correlated with reactions to the end of relationships, such as break-ups or divorce, including relationship attachment. Research has supported the existence of four different attachment styles (Bartholomew & Horowitz, 1991; Griffin & Bartholomew, 1994). Individuals with secure attachment styles think of themselves and others in an affirmative way; they are comfortable with interpersonal closeness and have an internalized sense of self worth. Those with preoccupied styles have an omnipresent sense of low self worth, and rely on relationship partners to validate their worth through fulfillment of excessive intimacy needs. They often feel anxious and depressed when these needs are unfulfilled by partners. Those with dismissive attachment styles have negative expectations of others, and avoid closeness with others because of this. Their high sense of self worth stresses independence and downplays the value of closeness with others. Finally, individuals with fearful attachment styles have negative expectations of other people and have a low sense of self-worth. They frequently avoid close relationships and intimacy with others to protect themselves. This study was looking at the ways women with different attachment styles might deal with a breakup and forgiving themselves for their own offenses within the relationship.

The responses that you provided on the questionnaires will become part of a large data set that will include multiple variables. We don’t know the results yet, but we hope that your participation will help us better understand how people with different attachment styles react to events within relationships. With this information we hope to further develop interventions and workshops to help women forgive themselves after the end of significant romantic relationships. If you want, a digest of the actual results can be sent you after the study has been completed; if you want to see the results, please contact me and let me know to what e-mail address I can send them. If you have any questions or comments about this work, feel free to contact me (Kathryn Campana) at campanakl@vcu.edu or kathryncampana@hotmail.com. I want to remind you that your responses will be kept confidential.

Some of the issues addressed in the workshop and surveys you completed may cause a degree of psychological discomfort. For example, relationship concerns, while relatively
common during and following a breakup, can create distress. As noted in the consent form, there are several resources available that can help you if you are at all concerned about your own relationship issues or life stressors. These resources include:

- VCU University Counseling Services (free for VCU students) 804-828-6200
- Center for Psychological Services and Development 804-828-8069
- Jewish Family Services 804-282-5644
- Henrico County Mental Health 804-727-8515
- Chesterfield County Mental Health 804-748-1227

*Thank you again for your participation!!!*
Vita

Kathryn Louise Campana was born on February 1, 1981, in Augsburg, Germany, and is an American citizen. She graduated with honors from West Springfield High School in Springfield, Virginia in 1999. While majoring in Psychology and minoring in Sociology and Women’s Studies at Virginia Commonwealth University, she served as a research assistant to Dr. Everett Worthington, Jr.’s Marriage Assessment, Treatment, and Enrichment (MATE) Center. She received her Bachelor’s of Science from Virginia Commonwealth University in Richmond, Virginia in 2003, and graduated with honors. During her first year of graduate school, she served as the Assistant Conference Director for A Campaign for Forgiveness Research’s conferences (“Helping People Forgive” and “Scientific Findings about Forgiveness”) held in Atlanta, Georgia in October 2003. During her first two years of graduate school, she acted as the Program Evaluations Research Assistant for the Virginia Department of Corrections. During her third year of graduate school she served as the Teacher Education Research Assistant for the School of Education at Virginia Commonwealth University. Kathryn has instructed several college-level courses at Virginia Commonwealth University as a graduate student instructor. During this time she also completed clinical practica at the Center for Psychological Services and Development (CPSD), Virginia Commonwealth University’s University Counseling Services (UCS), and at Jewish Family Services in Richmond, Virginia. Kathryn completed her predoctoral internship at Grand Valley State University’s Counseling and Career Development Center (CCDC) in Allendale, Michigan. Kathryn had been involved with numerous professional organizations in both student-affiliate and leadership capabilities. She is a student member of the International Association for Relationship Research (IARR), as well as a student member of the American Psychological Association and its divisions 17 (Counseling Psychology), 2 (Teaching of Psychology), 52 (International Psychology), 50 (Addictions), 43 (Family Psychology), and 44 (Society for the Psychological Study of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Issues). During her tenure in graduate school, she has been actively publishing, with seven publications and two manuscripts in phases of submission or preparation. Kathryn is currently employed as the post-doctoral psychology fellow at the Counseling and Human Development Center at the University of South Carolina in Columbia, South Carolina.