
FORGIVING USUALLY TAKES TIME: A LESSON LEARNED BY STUDYING INTERVENTIONS TO PROMOTE FORGIVENESS

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Numerous accounts of research on promoting forgiveness in group settings have been published, indicating that forgiveness can be promoted successfully in varying degrees. Many have suggested that empathy-based interventions are often successful. It takes time to develop empathy for an offender. We report three studies of very brief attempts to promote forgiveness in psychoeducational group settings. The studies use ten-minute, one-hour, two-hour, and 130-minute interventions with college students. The studies test whether various components—namely, pre-intervention videotapes and a letter-writing exercise—of a more complex model (the Pyramid Model to REACH Forgiveness) can produce forgiveness. Each study is reported on its own merits, but the main lesson is that the amount of forgiveness is related to time that participants spend empathizing with the transgressor. A brief intervention of two hours or less will probably not reliably promote much forgiveness; however, one might argue that it starts people on the road to forgiving.

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Forgiving is valued in secular society, but it holds a special place in Christianity (Marty, 1998). In peer counseling, pastoral care, or professional counseling, one holy grail we seek is the intervention that will produce instantaneous forgiveness. Can it be found in the right Scripture verse, the right prayer, the perfect metaphor, seeing the right movie, hearing a moving testimony, hearing the right words from a counselor, or attending a brief psychoeducational group? Certainly forgiveness can happen in each of these instances. But can it happen reliably? To what degree can we minimize the time needed to promote instantaneous forgiveness? Those questions are motivated by (a) a desire to help people rapidly reduce pain (although some theories would argue that rapidly reducing all feelings of pain might be counter-therapeutic), (b) a wish to help people experience the benefits of forgiving, or (c) a managed-care mentality to reduce the time required for treatment.

Empirical research on forgiveness has accelerated throughout the 1990s (Worthington, 1998a). Research has been directed toward the dynamics of forgiving in naturalistic settings and interventions to promote forgiveness through psychoeducational group settings or individual psychotherapy. Reviews of this research have become commonplace (Har-

graves & Sell, 1997; McCullough, Exline, & Baumeister, 1998; McCullough, Sandage, & Worthington, 1997; McCullough & Worthington, 1994; Worthington, 1998b; Worthington & Wade, in press).

Studies of the dynamics of interpersonal forgiveness within naturalistic settings are fundamentally different from studies of interventions aimed at promoting forgiveness. In naturalistic settings, forgiveness might happen in various ways in different circumstances for the same person. Different people might employ an enormous range of strategies for forgiveness such as praying for the grace to forgive, simply turning loose of unforgiveness, or working through the anger and pain through insight or catharsis. However, when people are exposed to interventions aimed at promoting forgiveness, they are directed through a series of activities that guide their experience. In psychoeducational groups, leaders are directive. Psychotherapeutic groups might exert less direction; nonetheless, the dynamics of group discussion will direct group members' attention in particular channels. Therefore, when one studies *interventions* to promote forgiveness, one is learning not about forgiveness per se, but about one way to guide people toward forgiveness. Outcome research investigates how effective intervention is at directing people's attention along the paths that are advocated.

In the present article, we report three studies of brief interventions that seek to promote forgiveness. Our intent is to determine the extent to which interventions can be brief yet effective.

STUDY 1

Introduction

McCullough and Worthington (1995) developed a 1-hour psychoeducational group intervention. The intervention, based on stimulating participants to empathize with the person who had transgressed against them, was compared to a different 1-hour intervention that sought to promote forgiveness by having people forgive so that they could achieve personal benefits from forgiving—such as better physical and mental health or a sense of freedom from resentment. Both psychoeducational groups were compared with a waiting-list control condition. McCullough and Worthington found that the two forgiveness interventions were more effective than the waiting-list control at promoting forgiveness. There was no statistical difference between the two forgiveness interventions. Kurusu (1996) sought to

improve effectiveness of the 1-hour empathy-based intervention that included consideration of personal benefits of forgiving with the core of the empathy-based intervention developed by McCullough and Worthington. Some discussion was eliminated from the empathy-based intervention and replaced with discussion of personal benefits. The intent was to combine the positive aspects of both interventions.

From the point of view of an intervener and client, the optimum intervention to promote forgiveness is one that takes little time and results in complete forgiveness 100% of the time, transforming the person's character into one in which forgiveness occurs within a lifetime of surrender to the Lord. At least two ways have promise: (a) providing pre-intervention information to ready group participants for the forgiveness intervention and (b) tailoring the intervention toward important participant variables.

For years in psychotherapy research, investigators have examined the impact of pre-therapy information on reducing the amount of time necessary to achieve psychotherapeutic improvement (e.g., Heitler, 1976). One idea for preparing clients is to provide information about the process of the intervention, which can dispel faulty expectations and reduce the adjustment to counseling. This is thought to free participants to attend to the content more fully. Previously, information has been transmitted by written or videotaped communication (Hackett, Enns, & Zetzer, 1992). We suspected that showing a brief videotape excerpt of an actual psychoeducational group concerning forgiveness might be even more effective, especially in combination with other information.

A second potential way to improve the power of a 1-hour intervention to promote forgiveness might be to tailor it to the religiosity of the group members (Godwin & Crouch, 1989; Lewis & Epperson, 1991; Pecnik & Epperson, 1985; Wyatt & Johnson, 1990). While our psychoeducational groups are consistent with promoting Christian forgiveness, the interventions are not explicitly Christian. Yet, even in large state universities, many Christians (and non-Christians) volunteer for our secular intervention to promote forgiveness. We thought that people with high or low religious commitment might respond differently to the same group depending on whether they thought the leader to be a Christian.

METHOD

Participants

Group members. Students ($N = 96$) from introductory psychology classes at Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU) identifying themselves as (a) having incurred a specific interpersonal hurt that they had wanted, but had been unable, to forgive and (b) wishing to participate in a group workshop designed to teach participants to forgive participated in this study. (These were selection criteria in all three studies reported in this article.) Participants (76% female) had a mean age of 20 years and represented several ethnic groups (34% African-American, 7% Asian-American, 32% Caucasian, 2% Latin-American, 24% other or not responding). Participants received credit toward their grade for participating (as was true in all three studies).

Group leaders. Two counselors (Caucasian females, ages 25 and 27) were fourth-year students from an APA-approved doctoral program in counseling psychology. Each counselor led four groups.

Design and Treatment Conditions

The study used a $2 \times 2 \times 3 \times 4$ repeated measures factorial design (Client Religiosity \times Information Content \times Leader Religious Label \times Time) plus two separate control conditions. There were two levels of client religiosity—Christian and non-Christian. Christians were those who (a) identified themselves as Christians, (b) reported more than “slight” importance of religion, and (c) attended church more than a few times a year. In pretreatment videotapes, there were six conditions. There were two levels of information content (information only and information-plus-session excerpt). These were crossed with three levels of the leader religious label (Christian, non-Christian, none specified) to make the six manipulated conditions. Within each of the six manipulated conditions were Christians and non-Christians, distributed randomly. Test-only controls were tested at pretape and follow-up, but they did not see a videotape or attend a group; this served as the control against which the 13 conditions that attended a group could be compared. No-tape controls attended a group, but saw no videotape; this served as the control against which the pretreatment interventions could be compared. The time factor is within subjects, utilizing repeated measures.

Pretreatment interventions. In half of the pretreatment interventions, labeled as the information-

only interventions, participants were presented with general information about psychoeducational groups. In the other half, labeled the information-and-session-excerpt interventions, participants also viewed an excerpt of an actual session with the therapist. In one-third of the interventions, participants were told that their group leader was a Christian. In one-third of the interventions, participants were told that their group leader was not a Christian. In one third of the interventions, no mention of the group leader's religiosity was made.

Forgiveness intervention. The 1-hour group to promote forgiveness was based on McCullough and Worthington's (1995) psychoeducational groups. Forgiveness treatments included cognitive and behavioral strategies for encouraging forgiveness, group discussion of the hurts that individuals had incurred, and the difficulty they had experienced in trying to forgive. Group leaders then encouraged discussion of why forgiveness was important and desirable. Leaders presented two rationales for forgiveness—to benefit the relationship and to benefit the forgiver. Group leaders encouraged participants to imagine causes for the offender's behavior that might have reflected the offender's attempts to fulfill personal needs and the offender's human imperfections and frailties, instead of focusing on thoughts of the offender's inherent meanness or the pain that the victim incurred during the hurtful event. This empathy-fostering exercise encouraged participants to list possible reasons for the offender's behavior and to discuss these with the group.

Participants were then encouraged to forgive themselves for any role that they might have played in provoking, encouraging, or failing to take necessary precautions to avoid the offense that occurred or for being slow to forgive. Participants were encouraged to express in a letter their feelings about the harmful event and the offender, and to express that they were working to forgive the offender. Participants were encouraged to mail the letter or seek out reconciliation *if they wished* and if it was possible, but to avoid sending the letter or engaging in other acts of reconciliation if they felt such attempts were inappropriate, dangerous, or impossible. Finally, group leaders summarized the learning, and participants were encouraged to continue working to forgive the offender. In Studies 2 and 3, only the changes from this protocol will be described.

Instruments

Personal Data Sheet. The Personal Data Sheet elicited demographic information from participants. People reported the amount of time since the offense occurred and rated their desire to forgive the offender, importance of religion, and frequency of attendance at religious services.

Wade's Forgiveness Scale. To measure forgiveness regarding the offense and offender, the Wade (1989) Forgiveness Scale was used. This 83-item scale consists of nine subscales. Items are scored with 5-point Likert-type ratings 1 (*Strongly Disagree*) to 5 (*Strongly Agree*). McCullough and Worthington (1995) found that eight of the nine subscales were highly correlated with each other and measured a single aspect of forgiveness. Kurusu (1996) found similar results. A composite of eight subscales (all except Toward God) ranged from 165 to 275. At pre-tape, the mean for all participants was 228.6 ($SD = 19.0$). Alpha was .73.

Procedure

Solicitations and initial screening. Participants were solicited in undergraduate psychology classes, as previously noted. Those interested were given the initial packet, which included the consent form, the Personal Data Form, and the Wade Forgiveness Scale. Of the 152 participants who returned their packets, 96 completed the study. Upon arrival for the videotape session, participants were randomly assigned to one of six pretreatment video groups or one of two control conditions. After the participants viewed the pretreatment videotapes, they completed the Wade Forgiveness Scale. Participants then returned 1 or 2 days later for their forgiveness intervention. They completed the Wade Forgiveness Scale after attending the forgiveness workshop and, then again, 4 weeks later. Two students independently rated videotapes of the psychoeducational groups. They agreed, on all ratings, that both of the counselors followed the script for the workshop.

RESULTS

Assumption Checks

Forgiveness composite scores at pre-tape did not differ by age, $F(15,80) = 1.12, p > .05$; gender, $F(1,94) = 2.35, p > .05$; or group assignment, $F(7,88) = .47, p > .05$. No effect for group leader was found, $F(1,78) = 2.20, p > .05$; nor was there any interaction

between workshop leader and time (S), $F(3,76) = 1.41, p > .05$.

Treatment effects

The effects of attending a forgiveness workshop (vs. not attending) were evaluated using one-way, within subjects ANOVAs, using the Wade Forgiveness Scale composite score as the dependent variable. Test-only control group participants did not experience more forgiveness from pre-tape ($M = 229$) to follow-up ($M = 234$), $F(1,5) = .85, p > .05$; effect size (ES) = .27. Participants who attended the workshop (13 groups) improved significantly, $F(1,89) = 14.45, p < .05, ES = .44$, from pre-tape ($M = 229$) to follow-up ($M = 237$), regardless of whether they saw any pretreatment videotape. We can conclude that the workshop alone produces a modest effect size (Cohen's $d = .17$) when compared with participants not receiving a workshop.

Pretreatment videotape effects were evaluated (relative to those who attended a workshop but did not see a tape; i.e., the no-tape controls). All people who saw a videotape also attended the workshop. Thus, those who saw any videotape were compared to those who attended a workshop, but saw no tape. No-tape control participants did not significantly increase in forgiveness from pre-tape ($M = 236$) to follow-up ($M = 237$), $F(1,9) = .02, p > .05, ES = .05$. Participants in the 12 experimental groups who did see a pretreatment videotape (and attended the workshop) experienced more forgiveness from pre-tape ($M = 228$) to follow-up ($M = 236$); $F(1,79) = 16.34, p < .05, ES = .33$. Cohen's d was .28. We can conclude that seeing a videotape produces a small effect.

To examine the effects of religiosity of participants, we originally planned to do a 2 (client religiosity: Christian vs. non-Christian) \times 2 (information content: information only vs. information-plus-session excerpt) \times 3 (leader label: Christian, non-Christian, none specified) \times 4 (time: pre-tape, post-tape, post-treatment, follow-up) ANOVA, using the Wade Forgiveness Scale composite score as the dependent measure. Random assignment to the conditions, however, resulted in one cell with only one participant (non-Christian participants, information-plus-session excerpt, leader labeled non-Christian). The ANOVA could not be validly conducted to investigate four-way interactions. We conducted the analysis, but do not report the invalid four-way interac-

tion. In consideration of space, we report collapsed means only for significant effects.

The main effects for client religiosity, $F(1,68) = 1.96, p > .05$, and information content, $F(1,68) = .07, p > .05$ were not significant. The interaction of Client Religiosity x Information Content was not significant, $F(1,68) = 1.21, p > .05$. The main effect for leader label was significant, $F(2,68) = 3.33, p < .05$, but post-hoc analysis could determine no clear indication of the locus of the differences. The interaction between Leader Label x Client Religiosity was significant, $F(2,68) = 5.06, p < .05$. Post-hoc one-way ANOVAs, collapsed over the four time periods, were conducted to explain the interaction. When the group's leader was labeled as a Christian, Christian and non-Christian participants forgave equally, $F(1,28) = .00, p > .05$. When the leader was labeled non-Christian, Christian participants forgave more ($M = 934.21, SD = 77.63$) than did non-Christian participants ($M = 824.00, SD = 71.04$), $F(1,28) = 5.51, p < .03$. When no label was given to the leader, Christian and non-Christian participants did not differ, $F(1,28) = 2.01, p > .05$. The interaction effect between leader label and information content was not significant, $F(2,68) = .97, p > .05$. The interaction effect between leader label, client religiosity, and information content was not significant, $F(2,68) = 1.23, p > .05$.

The main effect for time was significant, $F(3,66) = 3.72, p < .05$. The mean scores at pre-tape ($M = 227.7, SD = 19.5$) and post-tape ($M = 228.3, SD = 17.9$), which also did not differ from each other, and were both significantly lower than the scores at post-treatment ($M = 233.7, SD = 22.0$) and at follow-up ($M = 236.2, SD = 20.4$). The interaction effect between client religiosity and time was significant, $F(3,66) = 3.19, p < .05$. For Christian participants, the scores at pre-tape ($M = 235.4, SD = 18.3$) and post-tape ($M = 228.2, SD = 16.5$) were significantly lower than at post treatment ($M = 234.6, SD 21.1$) and follow-up ($M = 235.4, SD = 20.0$), Honest Significant Difference (HSD) was 5.1. For non-Christian participants, only the pre-tape ($M = 225.0, SD = 23.7$) and follow-up ($M = 238.8, SD = 22.2$) scores were significantly different, HSD was 11.8.

The interaction effects were not significant between information content and time, $F(3,66) = 1.53, p > .05$; between client religiosity, information content, and time, $F(3,66) = 1.33, p > .05$; between leader label and time, $F(6,132) = .93, p > .05$;

between leader label, client religiosity, and time, $F(6,132) = 1.14, p > .05$; between leader label, information content, and time, $F(6,132) = .42, p > .05$; and between leader label, client religiosity, information content, and time $F(6,132) = 1.78, p > .05$.

DISCUSSION

The main findings from this experiment support McCullough and Worthington's (1995) finding that a brief psychoeducational 1-hour intervention produced a modest amount of forgiveness in group participants ($d = .17$). The addition of 10 minutes of information about the procedure of being in a group, regardless of whether it did or did not include videotape footage of a group, produced a small effect beyond the effect of attending a workshop ($d = .33$). In examining differential impact for preintervention videotapes, we found that Christian and non-Christian participants forgave equally when the leader was thought to be a Christian or no label was given. When the leader was thought to be a non-Christian, though, Christians forgave more. That is consistent with the other research involving Christian clients or potential clients (see McCullough, Worthington, Maxie, & Rachal, 1997, for similar findings).

STUDY 2

Introduction

Based on Study 1, we suspected that providing the pregroup information about how groups on forgiveness might be conducted might simply increase the time to consider forgiveness. However, we reasoned that some additional benefits of pre-intervention might occur if group attendees received information that could speed up empathic identification rather than information related only to expectations of group process. By exposing people to brief presentations of content prior to their attending a psychoeducational group, people are thought to be "primed" to follow a particular cognitive process (Baumeister, Exline, & Sommer, 1998). We therefore investigated the effects of two 10-minute pre-intervention videotapes on receptivity to forgiveness workshops.

In the first 10-minute videotape, the viewer was led to think through the logic of the empathy-based workshops they would attend. We anticipated that this would prime participants to change quickly. Alternatively, the intervention may be interpreted as a very brief (10-minute) intervention to promote for-

giveness. In a second videotape, the narrator described the group experience (much like Study 1) and attempted to help workshop attendees develop positive but realistic expectations about the group workshop. We attempted to stimulate thought about what to change (i.e., priming) or how to change (i.e., expectation).

We investigated Prochaska, Norcross, and DiClementi's (1995) Trans-theoretical Model of Change throughout the study. Prochaska, Norcross, and DiClementi have identified five stages of change. The first is pre-contemplation, which occurs prior to the person's beginning to consider changing a behavior. The second stage is contemplation, in which the person attempts to initiate changes. The third stage is preparation, in which the person begins to actually try to change. The fourth stage is action, in which serious efforts to change are employed. The fifth stage is maintenance, in which the person who has successfully changed exerts efforts at maintaining those changes. We attempted to assess the level of readiness of change of participants in the group initially. We hypothesized that (a) both videotapes would move participants to higher stages of change and (b) the workshop would move people from one stage of change to a higher stage of change. Thus, we hypothesized that stage of change would mediate changes in forgiveness. McCullough and Worthington (1995) and McCullough, Worthington, and Rachal (1997) previously showed that empathy mediates forgiveness. We also attempted to replicate those findings.

Our hypotheses were that (a) the workshop experience would produce more forgiveness than no workshop; (b) the preparatory videotapes would increase the amount of forgiveness relative to the workshop alone; (c) if so, the priming videotape would produce more forgiveness than would the expectation videotape; and (d) if change occurred, it would be mediated by movement in stage of change and by empathy.

METHOD

Participants

Group members. Participants were students ($N = 64$) from introductory psychology classes at VCU. Participants (91% female) had a mean age of 21 years and represented various ethnic groups (44% African-American, 5% Asian-American, 50% Caucasian, 2% other).

Group leaders. The two counselors (both Caucasian males, ages 29 and 28 years) were third and fifth-year students (i.e., post-Masters level) from an APA-approved doctoral program in counseling psychology. One counselor led six groups; the other led five groups.

Design Treatment Conditions

The design was a 4 x 4 (Treatment x Time) analysis of variance (ANOVA) for each dependent variable. There were four levels of treatment: priming plus workshop, expectation plus workshop, workshop only, and no treatment. Measures were made at four points in time: pre-video, post-video, post-treatment, and follow-up (5 weeks after treatment).

Treatment conditions. The priming plus workshop intervention used a 10-minute video that is based on the assumption that people can be helped to increase their readiness to benefit from group interventions to promote forgiveness. Participants attended the workshop after empathy-based forgiveness was explained to them (see Study 2). The expectation plus workshop pretreatment intervention was similar to the Study 1 intervention-only information. In the third group, participants in the workshop only condition did not view any pretreatment video, but did participate in the workshop. Control group participants in the no treatment group did not view the pretreatment video or participate in the forgiveness workshop.

Forgiveness workshop. The workshop to promote forgiveness lasted two hours. Similar exercises were conducted as in the one-hour session (see Study 1), but more time was taken to deal with each in the workshop format. In particular, more time was spent helping participants develop empathy for the transgressor, gain a sense of their own fallibility as humans, and write a letter of forgiveness for the offense.

Instruments

Personal Data Sheet. The Personal Data Sheet was similar to the one used in Study 1.

Stage identification. This categorical measure was used to identify the stage of change for each participant. This measure was a modified version of the measure used by Prochaska and his colleagues, as well as other researchers (e.g., Marcus, Selby, Niaura, & Rossi, 1992). The name of the target behavior was changed (i.e., from stopped smoking to forgive). The version of this measure that was used for the present study consists of the following four

dichotomous format items: "I completely forgave my offender more than six months ago; I have tried to forgive my offender within the past six months; I am intending to forgive my offender in the next month; I am intending to forgive my offender in the next six months." This modified version has never been tested. However, it was predicted that this modification would be a valid execution of this categorical measure that has been successfully applied to several other areas of research.

Transgression-Related Interpersonal Motivations Inventory (TRIM; McCullough, Rachel, et al., 1998). The Transgression-Related Interpersonal Motivations Inventory (TRIM) was used to measure the degree of unforgiveness that the client had regarding the offense and offender. (Note: A low score on the TRIM is desirable.) Participants rated 12 items concerning the offense on a 5-point Likert-type scale 1 (*Strongly Disagree*) to 5 (*Strongly Agree*). McCullough, Rachel, et al. (1998) reported reliability and validity data in three studies.

Forgiveness Single Item (FSI). This 6-point Likert-type item requested participants to indicate the degree to which they had forgiven the person who had hurt them. Responses range from 1 to 6 (1 = *None*, 2 = *Slightly*, 3 = *Somewhat*, 4 = *Considerably*, 5 = *Mostly*, 6 = *Completely*). McCullough, Worthington, and Rachel (1997) adduced evidence of construct validity. A similar 5-point item was used by Subkoviak et al. (1995) to validate their self-report measure of forgiveness.

Batson's Empathy Adjectives (BEA). The BEA was used to discriminate empathy from forgiveness. This collection of adjectives measured empathy for a target person (Archer, Diaz-Loving, Gollwitzer, Davis, & Foushee, 1981). Factor analytic investigations (Batson, O'Quin, Fultz, Vanderplas, & Isen, 1983) have found these adjectives to load on a single factor that is orthogonal to a factor measuring personal distress. Internal consistency estimates have ranged from .79 to .95. Participants rated each of eight affects (sympathetic, empathic, concerned, moved, compassionate, warm, softhearted, and tender) on a 6-point scale indicating the degree to which they experienced that affect as they thought about the person who had hurt them 0 (*not at all*) to 5 (*extremely*).

Manipulation Check

Students ($N = 2$) rated two 10-minute portions of each videotape (one from the first hour, the other

from the second hour) according to whether the content of the videotape matched the plan of the workshop (where the counselor is speaking). Both independently agreed that the counselors followed the script for both the video and the workshop.

Procedure

Solicitations and initial screening. Participants were solicited from several undergraduate psychology classes similarly to Study 1. Participants completed a packet that included the Personal Data Form, TRIM, FSI, BEA, and the stage identification instrument (collectively called the assessment battery). It also had a form requesting participants to commit to a date to participate in the study.

Participants were assigned to conditions randomly upon arrival at the videotape session. Participants who were assigned to the priming plus workshop and expectation plus workshop conditions viewed a pretreatment video and then completed the assessment battery again. Participants who were assigned to the workshop only and no treatment conditions completed the assessment battery but saw no videotapes.

Participants then returned 1 or 2 days later and were randomly assigned to a forgiveness workshop if they were in one of the three appropriate conditions, namely, priming plus workshop, expectation plus workshop, or workshop only. After the workshop, participants completed the assessment battery. Participants in the no-treatment condition also completed the assessment battery despite not attending the workshop. Five weeks later, participants completed the assessment battery again. Attrition occurred after pretreatment ($n = 13$) and between the completion of the workshop and follow-up ($n = 13$), leaving 64 participants of the 90 originally recruited. Attrition was not different by condition.

RESULTS

Preliminary Analyses

TRIM. The correlation between the two subscales of the TRIM was $r(64) = .56, p < .01$. We concluded that these two subscales were strongly related and were measuring a single factor, unforgiveness. Therefore, a composite score was created by summing the two subscales.

Stages of change. To determine the degree to which stage of change was related to the participants' degree of unforgiveness and forgiveness, a one-way

Table 1
Unforgiveness (TRIM) and Forgiveness (FSI) at Each Stage of Change
(Collapsed Across Time: Study 2)

Stages of Change	Unforgiveness (TRIM)			Forgiveness (FSI)	
	N	M	SD	M	SD
Precontemplation	26	39.0 ^{a,b}	11.3	2.1 ^a	1.6
Contemplation	20	41.5 ^a	8.7	2.1 ^a	1.1
Preparation	39	33.6 ^{b,c}	9.8	3.3 ^b	1.5
Action	119	29.9 ^{c,d}	11.1	3.6 ^b	1.4
Maintenance	52	24.5 ^d	8.8	5.1 ^c	1.0

Note. ^{a,b,c,d} Means with the same superscript do not differ at $p < .05$.

ANOVA (by stage) was conducted for unforgiveness (TRIM) and for the single-item measure of forgiveness (FSI). Means and standard deviations of TRIM and FSI scores at each stage of change (collapsed across time) are reported in Table 1. A Tukey procedure was conducted to compare the TRIM and forgiveness means at each stage of change. HSD was 6.7 for the TRIM and .32 for the FSI.

Sample check. To ensure that conditions did not initially differ systematically among important variables, several one-way analyses of variance (ANOVA), using the TRIM composite score as the dependent measure, were conducted. On the TRIM composite forgiveness scores, people did not differ by age, $F(2,61) = 1.64, p > .05$; gender, $F(1,61) = .34, p > .05$; group assignment, $F(3,60) = 1.45, p > .05$; or religious affiliation (e.g., Buddhist, Christian, Muslim, Other; there were no Jewish or Hindu participants), $F(3,60) = 1.97, p > .05$. People did differ by ethnicity at pre-video, $F(3,60) = 4.20, p < .05$. European-Americans ($M = 35.7, SD = 11.3$) were more unforgiving than were African-Americans ($M = 27.9, SD = 11.4$).

FSI scores at pre-video did not differ by age, $F(2,61) = 2.15, p > .05$; group assignment, $F(3,60) = 1.29, p > .05$; ethnicity, $F(2,61) = 2.63, p > .05$; or religious affiliation, $F(4,59) = 1.85, p > .05$. FSI scores did differ at pre-video by gender, $F(1,62) = 7.91, p < .05$. The mean score for women ($M = 3.38, SD = 1.46, n = 58$) was higher than the mean score for men ($M = 1.67, SD = .82, n = 6$).

Workshop leader effects. Possible group leader confounds were evaluated with a 2 (workshop lead-

er) x 4 (time: pre-video, post-video, post-treatment, follow-up) ANOVA using the TRIM composite score and FSI as the dependent measures. No significant effect for group leader nor interaction was found for either analysis.

Workshop Effects

The degree of relatedness between the FSI and the TRIM composite score (measuring unforgiveness) was significant, $r(256) = -.60, p < .05$. Means and standard deviations for each group for the TRIM and FSI are given in Table 2. To assess the effectiveness of the forgiveness workshop, we conducted a 2 (workshop group: [priming plus workshop, expectancy plus workshop, workshop only] versus no treatment) x 3 (time: post-video, post-treatment, follow-up) ANOVA using the TRIM composite score as the dependent measure. The main effect for group was not significant, $F(1,62) = .06, p > .05$. The interaction effect for group by time was also not significant, $F(2,124) = .17, p > .05$, indicating that those who attended workshops did not reduce unforgiveness more than did those who did not attend a group.

We also conducted a 2 (treatment group [priming plus workshop, expectancy plus workshop, workshop only] vs. no treatment) x 3 (time [post-video, post-treatment, follow-up]) ANOVA using the FSI as the dependent measure. The main effect for group was not significant, $F(1,62) = .86, p > .05$. The interaction effect for group by time was significant, $F(2,124) = 4.52, p < .05$. When the three conditions that included workshops were collapsed, their means

Table 2
Means and (Standard Deviations) for Unforgiveness (TRIM) and Forgiveness (FSI): (Study 2)

	Unforgiveness (TRIM)				Forgiveness (FSI)			
	Pre-video	Post-video	Post-Workshop	Follow-up	Pre-video	Post-video	Post-workshop	Follow-up
Priming plus Workshop	28.8 (11.1)	30.6 (10.8)	28.4 (9.8)	27.0 (10.0)	3.7 (1.4)	3.4 (1.6)	4.2 (1.5)	4.4 (1.7)
Expectation plus Workshop	34.3 (12.3)	33.1 (13.6)	32.2 (11.3)	30.7 (13.9)	3.1 (1.5)	3.1 (1.4)	3.9 (1.5)	4.1 (1.6)
Workshop Only	36.8 (13.2)	36.5 (12.2)	31.2 (10.9)	32.6 (13.9)	2.9 (1.5)	2.9 (1.8)	3.6 (1.5)	3.9 (1.8)
No Treatment	31.4 (11.3)	31.3 (10.8)	29.7 (10.1)	29.0 (9.8)	2.9 (1.6)	3.2 (1.7)	3.3 (1.7)	3.2 (1.6)

Note. ^{a,b,c,d}Means with the same superscript do not differ at $p < .05$.

were 3.2 at post-video, 4.0 at post-workshop, and 4.2 at follow-ups. For the no treatment condition, the means were 3.2, 3.3, and 3.2, respectively, at those time periods.

To determine the locus of the interaction, one-way repeated measures ANOVAs for each group were performed. FSI scores of people who attended the forgiveness workshop increased significantly across the three measurement occasions from post-video to follow-up, $F(2,108) = 33.19, p < .05$; whereas, scores of those who did not attend the forgiveness workshop did not increase, $F(2,16) = .11, p > .05$. One-way repeated measures ANOVAs for those who attended the forgiveness workshop looking at just two time periods (e.g., post-video to post-treatment, post-treatment to follow-up) indicated that FSI scores increased significantly from post-video to post-treatment, $F(1,54) = 49.48, p < .05$, but not from post-treatment to follow-up, $F(1,54) = 2.22, p > .05$. The workshop produced increased reports of forgiveness relative to no workshop, and those gains were maintained at follow-up.

Videotape Pretreatment Effects

To assess the impact of the pretreatment interventions on workshop outcomes, we compared the two conditions in which people saw videotapes and also attended workshops with the condition in which people attended the workshop but did not see a pretreatment videotape. We conducted a 2

(treatment group [priming plus workshop, expectation plus workshop] vs. workshop only) x 4 (time [pre-video, post-video, post-treatment, follow-up]) ANOVA using the TRIM composite score as the dependent measure. No main effects or interactions were significant. Neither videotape pretreatment added to the impact of the workshop.

Potential Mediators of Forgiveness

To determine whether stage of change or empathy mediated the change in the single item of forgiveness that was produced in the workshops, we conducted analyses of covariance. If significant differences disappear when the effects of the covariate are removed, then we can conclude that the covariate mediated the change. We conducted a 2 (treatment group [priming plus workshop, expectation plus workshop, workshop only] vs. no treatment) x 2 (time [post-video, post-treatment]) ANOVA with the participants' change in Stage of Change from post-video to post-treatment as the covariate. The effect for the covariate (i.e., stage of change) was significant, $F(1,61) = 7.65, p < .05$. However, the interaction effect for group assignment by time remained significant, $F(1,61) = 4.87, p < .05$. This indicated that change in stage of change did not account for enough of the variance to negate the significant interaction between the group assignment and time. The same analysis with participants' change in BEA scores from post-video to post-treat-

ment as the covariate was conducted. The effect of the covariate (i.e., empathy) was significant, $F(1,61) = 15.78, p < .05$. The interaction effect for group assignment by time was not significant, $F(1,61) = .01, p > .05$. Therefore, we concluded that change in empathy scores from post-video to post-treatment mediated the relationship between attending the workshop and increasing forgiveness.

DISCUSSION

The main finding of this study was that a 2-hour forgiveness workshop produced a small amount of forgiveness in the participants (ES between .08 and .57 for six ESs). The findings replicated those of McCullough and Worthington (1995) and Study 1. Our efforts to move participants from one stage of change to another stage of change were largely unsuccessful, using either videotape (priming or expectation) or the workshop.

Despite our lack of success at increasing people's motivation to change, participants who were exposed to 2-hour empathy-based interventions did forgive (i.e., FSI), though they did not reduce their unforgiveness (TRIM) relative to no-workshop controls. It is reasonable to ask whether exposure to priming content for 10 minutes of videotape is able to have any impact on people who wish to forgive one who has transgressed against them. Our answer in the present study was "very little."

STUDY 3

Introduction

We have begun to think of brief attempts to produce forgiveness as being modest in their effects. One hour of psychoeducational intervention may produce little forgiveness. Many psychotherapists might address forgiveness within a single session of psychotherapy and expect that a considerable amount of forgiveness occurred. Obviously, most experienced therapists are realistic and do not expect complete forgiveness for deep psychological wounds or for a lifetime of maltreatment in a single hour. They do hope to use the minimum duration intervention that can produce clinically meaningful results.

Worthington and Sandage suggested that the empathy-based model of forgiveness proposed by McCullough and Worthington (1995), McCullough, Worthington, and Rachal (1997), McCullough, Sandage, and Worthington (1997), and McCullough

et al. (1998), might be extended by attempting to induce a sense of humility and gratitude in the person who is attempting to forgive a transgressor (see Sandage, 1999a, 1999b; Worthington, 1998a). This was called an empathy-humility model. Worthington (1998a) added a step of promoting public commitment after forgiveness. Worthington (1998c) summarized a 5-step Pyramid Model to REACH Forgiveness. Participants recall (R) the hurt. Then people empathize (E) with the transgressor. Forgiveness involves giving an altruistic (A) gift of forgiveness. It is solidified by committing (C) aloud to forgive and holding (H) onto forgiveness in the midst of doubt.

Several reasons for the effectiveness of the commitment steps were suggested (see Worthington, 1998a). Bryant (1998) suggested a reason not mentioned by Worthington (1998a), namely, cognitive dissonance. Aronson (1992) has argued that most investigations of cognitive dissonance have induced people to perform counter-attitudinal behavior, such as telling a student that an experiment one felt was boring was, in fact, enjoyable. When a person says aloud that a counter-attitudinal statement is true (without having a strong external justification for doing so), then the person generally revises his or her own subjective evaluation of the event. Aronson argued that, instead of helping people adopt attitudes they previously did not endorse, a more positive use of cognitive dissonance might be to attempt to help people do behaviors they wanted to do but had been unable to do. For example, a college woman wants to be sexually abstinent but finds that she is unable to do so. If she were induced to make a videotape advocating to high school students the benefits of sexual abstinence, she would feel like a hypocrite. Aronson has the person reflect on the hypocrisy of advocating publicly a position with which she is not living consistently. In follow-up assessments, people who made such videotapes were more sexually abstinent than those who did not.

This is similar to our research with forgiveness. In our groups, people who wished to forgive had been unable to do so. They wrote a letter stating their forgiveness. This letter was usually written after the person had gone through the first three steps of the Pyramid Model to REACH Forgiveness, so presumably some forgiveness had taken place. By making a public commitment through reading the forgiving letter aloud to other group members, this set up a situation similar to Aronson's (1992) cognitive-dissonance-through-hypocrisy conditions. People were

publicly advocating what they previously had not been able to do, namely, forgive.

In Study 3, we tested the effectiveness of one part of the Commitment step of the Pyramid Model to REACH Forgiveness—reading aloud a letter saying that one has forgiven a transgressor (see Bryant, 1998). We used a 1- or 2-hour workshop for the empathy-based treatment developed by McCullough and Worthington (1995) and replicated in Studies 1 and 2. From previous studies, we believed that the intervention would produce a small but measurable effect on promoting forgiveness. We thus established a 2 X 2 factorial design in which the intervention (or none) was crossed with a commitment intervention (or none). The commitment intervention involved writing a letter that one had forgiven the transgressor and then reading it aloud to another member of the psychoeducational group. The hypothesis was that the intervention would produce a measurable effect and the commitment intervention would produce another measurable effect. Thus, the two interventions together would be additive in their effects.

METHOD

Participants

Group members. Participants ($N = 106$) were research volunteers from undergraduate psychology classes at VCU. Participants included 78 females and 28 males. Age of respondents ranged from 16 years to 50 years, with a mean age of 23.7 years and a median age of 21 years. The ethnicity of participants was 45% Caucasian, 31% African-American, 8% Asian-American, 4% Latino/Latina, and 11% other. Participants were affiliated with numerous religious faiths, including 70% Christian, 4% Muslim, 2% Buddhist, 2% Jewish, 1% Hindu, and 19% identified as belonging to another religious group. Two participants indicated having no religious affiliation and two participants did not respond to the question. In response to the question about the importance of religion in their lives, 36% of participants responded “strongly,” 22% responded “moderately,” 20% responded “somewhat,” 13% responded “slightly,” and 9% responded “not at all.” One participant did not answer the question.

Design

The design was a 2 x 2 (Workshop or None x Public Commitment or None) factorial component anal-

ysis of elements of the Pyramid Model to REACH Forgiveness. Four treatment conditions resulted.

Independent Variables

Forgiveness workshop condition. Participants ($n = 28$) in the workshop condition attended a 2-hour forgiveness workshop. Each workshop contained between 6 and 9 participants. We did not stress public commitment to forgive. Under the normal 2-hour workshop (i.e., Study 2), participants wrote a certificate of forgiveness and a brief letter of forgiveness. Such a letter would confound the components. Instead we expanded the focus on empathy and humility by about 30 minutes. Commitment to forgive was promoted by writing the certificate alone. The resulting workshop was similar to Study 2.

Public commitment condition. Participants ($n = 30$) in the public commitment (letter-writing) condition attended this forgiveness intervention in groups of 6 to 9 subjects. The public commitment forgiveness intervention involved inducing participants to write a letter of forgiveness to the pre-identified person who hurt or offended them. In order to build cohesion and structure in the content of the letters, participants were asked, as a group, to generate a list of feelings associated with being hurt, ways people deal with being hurt, benefits of forgiveness, and costs of not forgiving. They used 30 minutes to write a letter to their offender. The letter (a) described the event briefly, excluding any identifiable information; (b) described the person’s understanding of the motives of the offender; (c) described the reasons for wanting to forgive the person; and (d) stated that the participant does forgive the person who hurt or offended them. Participants were assured that they did not have to send the letter. In fact, participants were discouraged from sending the letter unless forgiveness had been talked about with the offender, and only if it seemed safe and prudent to attempt reconciliation. Writing exercises have been found to be effective at increasing therapeutic gains, particularly when combined with oral delivery (Adkins, Taber, & Russo, 1985).

Following the completion of the letters, participants were asked to read their letters aloud in small groups of 3 to 5. Because perception of a high degree of choice has been shown to increase cognitive-dissonance effects, level of choice was manipulated by explaining to participants that they could choose their own letter-writing condition (write

only vs. write and read). They were told, however, that their cooperation would be very helpful since enough people had already participated in the write-only condition. All participants agreed to read aloud the letters. After reading the letters, participants listed five incidents in which they had not forgiven. They were reminded of their belief that it is good to forgive.

Workshop plus public commitment condition. Participants ($n = 25$) received a 75-minute workshop with the essentials of the Pyramid Model to REACH Forgiveness with 45 minutes of essentials of the public commitment condition. Intervention studies that use factorial designs always face the difficult choice of whether to present both components in full within the additive condition (leaving open the alternative explanation that effects are due to longer duration of treatment) or to shorten both components in the additive condition (leaving open the alternative explanation that one is not truly adding the components). We shortened the components so they fit within two hours. We did so by reducing the workshop's emphasis on empathy and humility by 30 minutes (so that it resembled a normal 2-hour workshop, as in Study 2, without the attention to commitment). We also shortened the discussion of benefits of forgiveness and costs of unforgiveness. The workshop portion took 75 minutes. The public commitment component was shortened to 45 minutes by (a) omitting the group list of hurts and not repeating material that was duplicated in the workshop, (b) allowing only 20 minutes to compose letters, and (c) omitting the list of five unforgiven hurts. Participants thus accomplished what we believed to be the crucial elements of both components within 2 hours.

No treatment condition. Participants ($n = 23$) in the no-treatment control condition completed the pre-treatment, post-treatment, and follow-up questionnaire packets at the same times as participants in the workshop conditions, without receiving any forgiveness interventions.

Instruments

Personal Data Sheet, TRIM (McCullough, Rachal, et al., 1998), **FSI** (McCullough, Worthington, and Rachal, 1997) and **Batson's Empathy Adjective (BEA) Questionnaire** (Batson et al., 1986). These measures were the same as reported in Study 2.

Test of Self-Conscious Affect (TOSCA; Tangney, Miller, Flicker, & Barlow, 1996). The TOSCA assesses shame-proneness, guilt-proneness, externalization, detachment-unconcern, alpha pride (pride in self) and beta pride (pride in behavior). It consists of ten negative and five positive scenarios encountered in everyday life. Participants rate their likelihood of reacting to each scenario on a five-point scale.

Procedure

Participants were solicited from undergraduate psychology classes as in Studies 1 and 2. They completed a packet containing all instruments. Participants who returned the packet were notified when and where to attend a forgiveness intervention. Participants arrived at the experimental site at their scheduled time. They were randomly assigned to one of the four conditions. People in the no-treatment condition completed questionnaires and left. Others attended an intervention. Following completion of the intervention, participants completed a post-treatment questionnaire packet. The follow-up assessment occurred 3 weeks after the treatment conditions at the experimental site. Participants were debriefed about the study at that time.

RESULTS

Initial Analyses

Means and standard deviations for each condition at each time are listed in Table 3 for the TRIM composite, the revenge subscale of the TRIM, the avoidance subscale of the TRIM, and the FSI. The TRIM was correlated with the FSI ($r = -.49, p < .001$) and with empathy ($r = -.75, p < .001$). Unlike Study 2, the avoidance subscale was only moderately correlated with the revenge subscale ($r = .50, p < .001$). Analyses considered both subscales separately. The avoidance subscale was correlated with the forgiveness single-item measure ($r = -.50, p < .001$) and empathy ($r = -.75, p < .001$). The revenge subscale was correlated nonsignificantly with the single-item measure ($r = -.30, p > .001$) and significantly with empathy ($r = -.48, p < .001$). The forgiveness single item was correlated with empathy ($r = .57, p < .001$).

To insure that participants in the four conditions were equivalent on variables prior to the intervention, 10 one-way ANOVAs were performed using pretest scores on avoidance, revenge, the FSI, age,

Table 3
Means and Standard Deviations of Dependent Variables (Study 3)

Variable	WORKSHOP				NO WORKSHOP			
	<u>No Public</u>		<u>Public</u>		<u>No Public</u>		<u>Public</u>	
	<u>Commitment</u>	<u>SD</u>	<u>Commitment</u>	<u>SD</u>	<u>Commitment</u>	<u>SD</u>	<u>Commitment</u>	<u>SD</u>
TRIM								
Pre	34.63	10.44	30.22	11.38	28.84	10.76	30.30	9.60
post	30.44	10.18	28.26	9.40	28.35	10.85	28.90	9.49
Follow-up	27.33	10.89	27.91	10.43	28.19	10.82	27.50	11.14
Revenge (TRIM)								
Pre	10.96	4.69	8.32	4.28	7.77	3.09	8.19	4.00
Post	8.50	4.55	7.23	3.29	7.15	3.29	7.89	3.21
Follow-up	7.81	3.14	8.23	4.25	7.62	3.76	7.22	3.52
Avoidance (TRIM)								
Pre	23.7	7.5	22.5	8.7	21.1	8.5	21.7	7.2
Post	22.2	7.6	21.6	7.2	21.2	8.8	21.7	7.3
Follow-up	19.5	9.3	19.7	7.5	20.6	8.7	19.6	9.0
Forgiveness single item (FSI)								
Pre	3.3	1.8	3.2	1.6	3.3	1.7	3.4	1.9
Post	4.1	1.3	4.1	1.4	3.7	1.7	4.0	1.5
Follow-up	4.3	1.6	3.9	1.4	3.4	1.8	4.2	1.7

Note. TRIM is Transgression-Related Interpersonal Motivations Inventory. Its range is from 12 to 60. The Revenge (range 5 to 25) and Avoidance (range 7 to 35) are subscales. The Forgiveness single item (FSI) is a Likert-like item measuring degree of forgiveness from 1 (*none*) to 6 (*completely*).

gender, religious importance, time since the incident, impact of the incident, empathy, and trait guilt as dependent variables. None were significant at the Bonferroni-corrected test-wise alpha of .005. The forgiveness workshops were audiotaped. Two independent judges, naïve to the hypotheses, listened to 15-minute random recordings of the workshops and judged whether the elements of each workshop that were described in the manual had been executed. Inter-judge agreement was 100%.

Comparison of Conditions

Participants in the workshop condition, public commitment condition, and workshop plus public commitment condition were expected to increase forgiveness, as measured by the FSI, avoidance motivation, and revenge motivation, more than participants in the no treatment control group. It was also expected that participants in the workshop plus public commitment condition would demonstrate a greater increase in forgiveness toward their offender

than participants in either the workshop condition or public commitment condition alone.

To test this hypothesis, a multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) with repeated measures was performed using each of the dependent variables (revenge, avoidance, and FSI). The forgiveness workshop condition, public commitment condition, and workshop plus public commitment condition were compared to a no-treatment control group in a 2 (presence or absence of a workshop) x 2 (presence or absence of public commitment) x 3 (measurement occasion) within subjects design. Of primary interest is whether conditions changed differentially with time. That is, the three important effects were Workshop x Time, Public Commitment x Time, and (most importantly) Workshop x Public Commitment x Time.

A MANOVA with repeated measures revealed a significant main effect for all groups collapsed across time, multivariate $F(3, 203) = 11.79, p < .001$, but that is theoretically of little interest and

was not analyzed further. The MANOVA revealed a significant (Workshop x Public Commitment x Time) interaction, multivariate $F(3,203) = 3.44, p < .05$. The Workshop x Time multivariate $F(3,203) = 1.92, p > .05$, and Public Commitment x Time), multivariate $F(2,203) = 1.07, p > .05$, interactions were not significant.

To determine how the multivariate interaction affected each dependent variable, univariate ANOVAs were performed on each dependent variable. The Workshop x Public Commitment x Time interaction was significant for revenge motivation, $F(2,204) = 4.63, p < .01$, but not for avoidance motivation, $F(2,204) = 1.03, p > .05$, nor for the FSI, $F(2,204) = 1.70, p > .05$. To determine the locus of the effect on revenge motivation for the interaction, simple-interaction-effects analyses were performed using repeated measures ANOVAs, with revenge motivation as the dependent variable. Namely, the data were split, and the repeated measures ANOVAs were run twice—once for participants in the workshop condition and again for participants in the no-workshop condition. In the workshop condition, there was a significant effect for time, $F(2,96) = 5.90, p < .01$, which is theoretically irrelevant. The Public Commitment x Time interaction was significant, $F(2,96) = 3.86, p < .05$. In the no-workshop condition, there were no significant main effects, and the interaction was also not significant, $F(2,108) = .86, p > .05$. Thus, changes in revenge motivation occurred only for participants involved in the workshop condition, and not for participants who did not receive the workshop.

To determine the nature of the significant Public Commitment x Time interaction for workshop participants, a simple main effects analysis was conducted using revenge motivation as the dependent variable. A paired-samples t -test compared changes across time for those who did and did not write and read the letter (i.e., public commitment or no-public commitment conditions, respectively). Participants in the workshop with no public commitment condition significantly decreased revenge motivation between the pretest ($M = 10.85$) and the posttest ($M = 8.37$), and between the pre-test and the follow-up ($M = 7.80$). The critical value was 2.06. Participants in the workshop plus hypocrisy condition did not change between pre-test ($M = 8.12$) and post-test ($M = 7.13$), nor between the pretest and follow-up ($M = 8.20$).

DISCUSSION

In the present experiment, we replicated the finding that the workshops, although only two hours in duration, produced a small yet statistically significant effect on promoting forgiveness. The letter, however, did not produce an effect by itself, nor was the addition of the letter reading differentially effective from the workshop alone. (If anything, it reduced the effectiveness—probably because it reduced the time participants spent in empathic reflection about the transgressor.)

One reason that this letter reading intervention might not have achieved the effect that was desired is that a level of felt hypocrisy was not generated in the participants who did not attend a workshop but were induced to write a letter stating their forgiveness and then read it aloud. Aronson (1992) has stressed that for a hypocrisy intervention to be effective, the participants must be induced strongly to feel hypocrisy. While this might be a viable intervention for experiments in social psychology, generally, inducing strong feelings of hypocrisy in clients is counter-therapeutic. We opted to present the situation without attempting to engender strong feelings of hypocrisy. This failure to follow Aronson's protocol might have been responsible for the failure to find effects in his well-replicated process of cognitive dissonance through the generation of hypocrisy.

Our "hypocrisy" intervention, therefore, was more like one of the techniques we typically use in the Pyramid Model to REACH Forgiveness. The C (Commit to Forgive) step usually has people (a) verbalize the forgiveness they have experienced after they have privately forgiven, (b) elaborate on their feelings of forgiveness, (c) construct a "Certificate of Forgiveness" announcing that on a particular day the offender was forgiven, (d) write a letter of forgiveness and read it aloud (as in the current study), (e) either burn the letter symbolizing that the debt is paid or (perhaps) send the letter, and (f) perform the symbolic act (such as releasing a stone to symbolize giving up the weight of unforgiveness; see Marks, in press). Therefore, it is unsurprising that the hypocrisy condition, which was a small portion of our typical C component, was not as powerful as the well-replicated empathy-humility core of the intervention.

GENERAL DISCUSSION

In the three studies presented in this article, we have made systematic attempts to investigate addi-

Table 4
Dose-effect Relationships for the Interventions aimed at Promoting Empathy-based Forgiveness Across the Three Studies

Group	Time (minutes)	ES
13 Conditions (Study 1)	60	.44
Priming (Study 2; pre-video to post-video)	10	.20 .20
Priming & Workshop (Study 2)	130	.21 .53
Expectation & Workshop (Study 2)	120	.07 .57
Workshop Only (Study 2)	120	.46 .44
Workshop (Study 3)	120	.41 .54
Workshop & Public Commitment (Study 3)	120	.19 .60
Public Commitment Only (Study 3)	120	.27 .33

^aIn calculating effect size (ES), the Wade Forgiveness Scale composite was used for Study 1. The top number in each cell for Studies 2 and 3 is for scales on the TRIM; the bottom number is for the FSI.

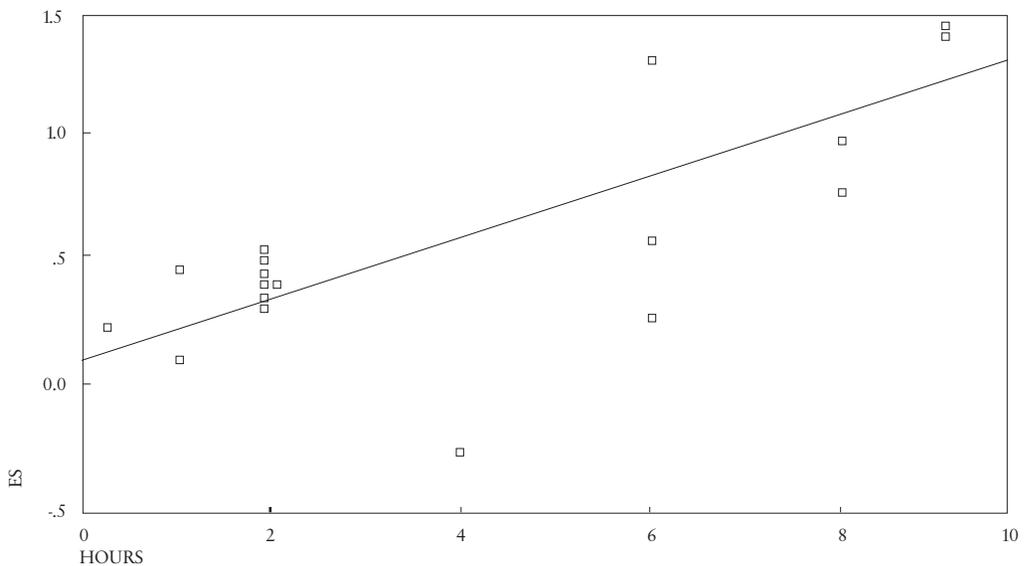


Figure 1. Dose-effect curve for group interventions to promote forgiveness. Hours of intervention are plotted against mean effect size (ES; pre-intervention minus post-intervention divided by mean standard deviation). This figure includes data from Worthington, Sandage, and Berry (in press) as well as data from the three present studies.

tional components of the Pyramid Model to REACH Forgiveness. The main conclusion from these efforts is that anything done to promote forgiveness has little impact unless substantial time is spent at helping participants think through and emotionally experience their forgiveness. The R, A, C, and H components of the Pyramid Model to REACH Forgiveness might add differentially to the basic generation of empathy, but the present studies do not suggest that much is occurring beyond a generation of empathy in the participants. In previous research, however, Sandage (1997) has shown that the (A) component of the REACH model, which involves the experiences of humility through recalling one's own failings and receipt of forgiveness from another, does add significantly to the empathy-based intervention.

Worthington, Sandage, and Berry (in press) have examined the effect sizes produced by interventions of different duration by a variety of interveners. They arrived at a dose-effect curve that had a correlation between effect size and a duration of treatment of .70. Those interventions range from 1 hour to 9 hours, with most clustering above 4 hours in duration. The three studies in the present article extend the dose-effect curve into the interventions of brief duration. Kurusu's (1996, 1999) data (1 data point to each) were included in the Worthington et al. (in press) dose-effect relationship. We have reproduced an updated dose-effect curve in Figure 1. It includes the effect sizes generated in the present three studies (see Table 4). This extends interventions to promote forgiveness to brief durations. For example, Kurusu (1999) used a 10-minute videotape to encourage people to reason through the Pyramid Model to REACH Forgiveness.

As a consequence of including the new data points from the present studies, a total of 18 data points are included on Figure 1. The correlation coefficient is $r(16) = .73, p < .01$. The slope of the line is .11 and the intercept at $t = 0$ is .08. Using this regression line, it is possible to predict the effect size produced by any duration of treatment that aims at promoting forgiveness by way of inducing empathy for the transgressor. The regression equation is

$$ES = (.08 + .11) T$$

where ES is the effect size calculated by taking the absolute value of the difference between pre-intervention and post-intervention forgiveness and dividing by the pooled standard deviation of those scores, and T is the duration of the intervention in

hours. If two or more effect sizes exist, the mean of the effect sizes is used.

All of the studies included in the dose-effect curve have treated people in groups. The conclusions might therefore apply to individuals who are attempting to forgive a transgressor within the group setting. Three empirical efforts have been made to study the promotion of forgiveness in other contexts. For example, Freedman and Enright (1996) and Coyle and Enright (1997) each treated individuals in psychotherapeutic settings. Ripley (1998) treated couples in a psychoeducational group setting. We attempted to see how much the dose-effect relationship would be affected if those data points were included in the regression equation. If the Freedman and Enright data are included, the correlation changes from .73 to .78. If the Coyle and Enright data are included, the correlation changes from .73 to .86. This suggests that the inclusion of psychotherapeutic interventions might involve the same processes that are involved with promoting forgiveness with individuals in group settings.

If the Ripley (1998) data point is included, the correlation changes from .73 to .70. Ripley's experiment, however, involved having both partners available within the group. The interpersonal dynamics of two partners being able to talk about transgressions seemed to adversely affect the forgiveness that was achieved. In subsequent research involving couples present at the same time, we have suggested that partners must learn the Pyramid Model to REACH Forgiveness within the context of reconciliation (Worthington & Drinkard, 2000). That is, partners need to be taught how to communicate about forgiveness, not just to experience a transgression and grant forgiveness when the partner who was offended or hurt is present.

In conclusion, forgiveness does not occur quickly in most cases. While individual instances of rapid forgiveness might occur, it is best to conclude that forgiveness takes time.

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