

## Forgiveness: Easy to Say but Hard to Do

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### Abstract

Forgiveness is a reduced desire to avoid the person who has hurt us, and a reduced desire to hurt or take revenge against the individual and is accompanied by increased compassion and desire to act positively towards the person who hurt us. The purpose of this study is to describe forgiveness as a form of action that is easy to say but becomes a difficult thing to do. The writing of this research uses library research or library research. In this study the researcher collected from journal articles, books and news related to forgiveness. The results of several studies obtained explain that forgiveness is something that is easy to say but becomes a very difficult thing to do. There are various factors that can influence forgiveness. The following are factors that influence the first apology, Cognitive Social Variables. Second, Attack Characteristics. Third, the Quality of Interpersonal Relations. Fourth, Personality Factor. One of the most effective ways to forgive is to develop empathy and forget the painful past.

**Keywords:** Forgiveness, library research

### Introduction Section

No human being is perfect, who is free from mistakes. In responding to mistakes, some individuals are quick to understand it, the pressure that individuals suggest is due to the mistakes made. Feelings of self-condemnation may be carried out by individuals to overcome experiences related to regretting mistakes that have been made. Regret for a mistake can sometimes make individuals isolate themselves from others or even endanger themselves.

The concept of self-forgiveness began to become a concern when researchers found that there were individuals who felt they were the most difficult person to forgive, themselves (Woodyatt, Worthington, Wenzel, & Griffin, 2017). Forgiveness has a big impact on a person's psyche, in a friendship relationship sorry makes attachments become attachments again. The negative experiences experienced by a child in a friendship will cause trauma that is difficult to remove if there is no forgiveness intervention. The source of the violation and the object of forgiveness can refer to oneself, other people, or many people, or situations that people judge to exceed their controllability limits (such as disease, "fate", or natural disasters).

Forgiveness is a form of therapy for overcoming various psychological problems, the dynamics that occur when individuals forgive, they will be able to release feelings of pain, anger, disappointment, or other negative emotions, on the one hand developing positive emotions in themselves (Subandi, 2010). Praptomo Jati, Zuanny, Daningratri, 2022).

Studies on forgiveness have indeed been carried out by many previous researchers, including various approaches and different variables. Therefore, the researcher wants to discuss how easy it is to say sorry but it becomes a very difficult thing to do.

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## Method

In this study, the researcher collected journal articles, books, and news related to forgiveness. The journal search reference used is Google Scholar and news searches using the Google web browser. In the article search, there were 12 relevant articles and an in-depth reading was carried out by the researcher for the review process. These three types of references will contain the results of research topics related to the theme that will be raised by the author. These references will be studied carefully to obtain information and explanations regarding what forgiveness is, and how forgiveness becomes easy to say but difficult to do.

## Results and Discussion

### *Theoretical Concept of Forgiveness*

The concept of self-forgiveness began to emerge in the early to mid-1990s. Early research on self-forgiveness conducted by Enright (1996) described a triad or three aspects of forgiveness including: (1) interventions to help people forgive others, (2) accepting forgiveness from others, and (3) forgiving oneself. In 1997, the John Templeton Foundation marked a Request for Proposals (RFP) on forgiveness that involved scientists with research on forgiveness aspects. Most studies say self-forgiveness tends to be cross-sectional. However, self-forgiveness is a change process that is difficult to capture empirically because it unfolds in different time frames and different ways for different individuals (Woodyatt, 2017).

According to McCollough (Alawiyah, 2020) an expert on the psychology of forgiveness, forgiveness is a reduced desire to avoid people who have hurt us, and a reduced desire to hurt or take revenge against the individual and is accompanied by increased compassion and desire to act positively toward the hurting person. McCollough et al revealed that forgiveness is a set of motivations to change a person not to take revenge and reduce the drive for hatred towards the offending party, maintain hatred for the offending party and increase the drive for conciliation of the relationship with the offending party (McCollough & Whorhinton et al, 1997).

Enright et al. (in Schimmel, 2002) see forgiveness as a form of readiness to give up one's right to belittle, blame and take revenge on the perpetrator who has acted wrongly against him, and at the same time develop compassion, generosity, even love for him. Meanwhile, Nashori (2008) explains that forgiveness is the process of removing wounds or scars in the heart. Although sometimes the memory of the sad event in the past still exists and often appears, the perception of the painful event has been erased.

Four factors influence a person to forgive (McCollough, Pargament & Thoresen, 2000), namely:

#### 1. Cognitive Social Variables

Forgiving behavior is influenced by the victim's assessment of the perpetrator, the victim's assessment of the incident, the severity of the incident, and the desire to stay away from the perpetrator. This thing that then affects the behavior of forgiveness is Rumination About the Transgression, namely the tendency to continuously remember events that can cause anger, thus preventing him from creating forgiving behavior.

#### 2. Attack Characteristics

A person will find it more difficult to forgive events that are considered important and also meaningful in his life. For example, someone will find it harder to forgive her husband's infidelity compared to the behavior of other people who skipped the queue. Girard & Mullet, Ohbuchi, Kameda & Agarie (in McCulloch, Pargament & Thoresen, 2000) explain that the more important and meaningful an event is, the more difficult it will be for someone to forgive.

#### 3. Quality of Interpersonal Relations

Another factor that influences behavior in forgiveness is the closeness or relationship of the person who was hurt by the perpetrator. Research has shown that couples tend to forgive their partner's behavior if there is satisfaction in marriage, closeness to each other, and a strong commitment (Rolloff & Janiszewski, in McCulloch Pargament & Thoresen, 2000). In addition, there are three forms of relationships related to the giving of forgiveness. First, during the marriage period, there is an experience or history that is passed together where partners share feelings and thoughts so that when one of them makes a mistake, the partner will be able to forgive by empathizing with the mistakes made by his partner. Both partners' ability to interpret that painful

events happened for their good. Third, the partner who made a mistake will apologize by showing a deep sense of regret, so that the partner will try to forgive.

#### 4. Personality Factor

Mauger, Saxon, Hamill & Panell (McCollough Pargament & Thoresen, 2000) explain that forgiving behavior is included in the Agreeableness factor in the Big Five. McCollough, Pargament, and Thoresen (2000) added that empathy is one of the factors that facilitate the occurrence of forgiveness factors in people who have been hurt. According to Enright & Coyle (in Witvliet, Ludwig & Laan, 2001) empathy is the ability to understand and see other people's points of view that are different from one's point of view and try to understand what factors are behind one's behavior.

While there are several types of forgiveness that someone does before apologizing to someone who has hurt or has made a mistake, this type of forgiveness or forgiveness proposed by Enright, Santos, and Al-Mabuk (Lijo, 2018) is as follows:

- a. Forgiveness Revenge is forgiveness that is done after taking revenge.
- b. Restitution Forgiveness is forgiveness to remove guilt after restoring the relationship.
- c. Extraordinary Forgiveness is forgiveness that is done under social pressure.
- d. Legitimate Extraordinary Forgiveness is forgiveness that is given after considering moral character or authority.
- e. Forgiveness for Social Harmony is forgiveness given to reduce social harmony and peace that has been established.
- f. Forgiveness as a form of action and expression of unconditional love.

Enright (2001) added that the process of forgiving itself includes four stages, namely:

- a. *Uncovering Phase*, is a phase where the re-opening of moments when experiencing painful and repeated events appear in his mind.
- b. *Decision to Forgive Phase*, This is the deciding phase in which the individual will gain insight into the importance of forgiveness.
- c. *Work Phase* is a time of empathy where individuals will begin to take on a role by interpreting the painful events experienced by positioning themselves who have hurt and will begin to accept the wounds that have been experienced.
- d. *Deepening Phase*, is a phase where individuals will feel the benefits of forgiveness and new meaning in building relationships.

#### ***Journal Review Characteristic***

No	Tahun	Judul	Penulis	Subjek
1	2019	Efektivitas cognitive behavior therapy (CBT) terhadap peningkatan pemaafan narapidana yang akan bebas.	Adzibah, U.	12 Inmates stage 4
2	2021	Hubungan antara Pemaafan dan Psychological Well-Being pada Korban Kekerasan dalam Rumah Tangga.	Angela, M., Felicia Felicia, &Febriani Cipta.	100 women victims of domestic violence
3	2008	Pemaafan:A Sampling of Research Results. <i>Coference United Nations Headquarters Midday Workshops</i> , Pemaafan: <i>Partneringwith the Enemy. Reprinted.</i>	APA's Team at the United Nations	
4	2020	Pengaruh Empati Terhadap Pemaafan dan Percaya Diri Dalam Hubungan Pertemanan	Nadya Alawwiyah	Student

5	2019	Pemaafan Pada Individu yang Mengalami Perselingkuhan dalam Pernikahan	Maya Khairani, Dian Purnama Sari	60 husbands and wives who experienced infidelity (30 men, 30 women)
6	2020	Pengembangan Skala Pemaafan Diri ( <i>Self-Forgiveness</i> )	Dyah Ayu Larasati, Tria Widyastuti	102 Student
7	2017	Hubungan Komunikasi Interpersonal dan Pemaafan dengan Kebahagiaan Suami Istri	Nurhayati	200 husband and wife
8	2016	Empati dan Pemaafan Pada Mahasiswa Fakultas Psikologi UIN Suska Riau	Dwi Indra Lestari, Ivan Muhammad Agung	309 Undergraduate students from the Faculty of Psychology (47 males, 262 females)
9	2016	Pemaafan Pada Santriwati Etnis Sunda	Anis Nurlaela, Elis Anisah	181 Sundanese ethnic student
10	2022	Peningkatan Kesejahteraan Psikologis Narapidana Wanita Melalui Terapi Pemaafan	Subandi, Ardian Praptomojati, Iyulen Pebry Zuanny, Deisi Daningrati	7 female prisoners
11	2018	Efektivitas Terapi Pemaafan dengan Model Proses dari <i>Enright</i> untuk Membantu Remaja Korban Perceraian dalam Memaafkan Orang Tua	Kristina Martha, Ni Made Taganing Kurniati	A 20-year-old girl who is the victim of a divorce from her parents
12	2022	Terapi Pemaafan untuk Menurunkan Tingkat Kecemasan Remaja Korban Kekerasan	Sherli Kurnia Oktaviana	22 subjects Teenagers aged 15 – 18 years and had

				experiences of violence within 2-3 months
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According to the opinion of experts such as Miller, Worthington, and McDaniel (Khairani and Sari, 2019), a woman tends to forgive more easily than men with several things that encourage the forgiveness process such as the forgiveness process, individual traits, and the situation where something happens. error. As stated by Hall and Frenchman in (Larasati and Widyastuti, 2020) realizing mistakes and accepting responsibility starts feelings of guilt and regret which then leads to self-forgiveness. Self-forgiveness grows when a person begins to be honest in dealing with and grappling with one's own mistakes.

Cornish and Wade (Larasati and Widyastuti, 2020) reveal that there are four components in the process of self-forgiveness, namely: Responsibility, which means that to achieve self-forgiveness, someone is also responsible for his actions. Remorse (regret) as a response to responsibility, individuals often experience various kinds of emotions such as shame that must be reduced. Restoration is an action-oriented step that follows responsibility and regret. Renewal (Renewal), is when a person finally gets an emotional state of self-forgiveness that involves compassion, acceptance, and self-respect.

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In forgiving ideally negative attitudes and feelings must be replaced with positive attitudes and feelings. But in reality, this is not easy to do, let alone quickly. There are always psychological problems between two parties who have experienced a broken relationship due to a mistake. Adult forgiveness does not erase all negative feelings but becomes a balance of feelings (Nurhayati, 2017).

Various things influence a person in the process of forgiveness, one of which is empathy as stated by McCollough (2000) and Worthington (1998) in their writings, that empathy is a determinant of the ability to forgive. Enright, Freedman, and Rique (1998) state that empathy is a factor in the working phase of the forgiveness process. Empathy is a person's ability to understand the feelings and emotions of others and the ability to imagine oneself in another's place (Lestari and Agung, 2016).

From some of the explanations above, it can be concluded that several things are factors for the formation of forgiveness, the first is that there is empathy in the victim towards the perpetrator, and the second is socio-cognitive where a perpetrator has regretted what has been his mistake, the third level of violation that has been committed by the perpetrator against the victim, fourth the personality characteristics of the victim who have an introverted or extroverted character, and the last is the quality of the relationship that has been established between the perpetrator and the victim.

Many people also say sorry just as a greeting and then forget without further understanding the meaning of forgiveness. As a result, feelings of disappointment and even regret arise after forgiving because the same person repeats the mistake. It is easy for people to apologize and give forgiveness without being accompanied by wholehearted acceptance, not just lip service as if it is something natural and even habitual (Nurlaela and Anisah, 2016).

Forgiveness is a difficult thing for people who have been hurt by a problem. Many things can affect the process of forgiveness, one of which is Empathy which is a determinant in the process of forgiveness, where

empathy is a person's ability to understand the feelings and emotions of others and the ability to imagine oneself in someone else's place. Forgiveness sometimes only happens in the mouth, but in the heart, there is still pain. For that in the process of forgiveness, it is important to be able to forget or leave the past and try to only look to the future.

## Conclusion

From the results of the literature review that the author did, some conclusions can be explained as follows:

1. Forgiveness is a process of erasing wounds in the heart, although sometimes memories of painful past events still exist and often appear, the perception of the painful event has been erased. Forgiveness is easy to say but very difficult to do. Forgiveness is a form of one's readiness to let go of heartache and develop it into generosity and compassion.
2. Various factors can influence forgiveness. The following are factors that influence forgiveness. Cognitive Social Variables, Attack Characteristics, Quality of Interpersonal Relationships, and Personality Factors are several factors that can encourage forgiveness. The type of forgiveness itself consists of several forgiving things including Revenge Forgiveness, Restitution Forgiveness, Extraordinary Forgiveness, Legitimate Extraordinary Forgiveness, Forgiveness for Social Harmony, Forgiveness as a form of action, and expression of unconditional love. In the forgiveness process, there are four stages, namely the Uncovering Phase, the Decision to Forgive Phase, Work Phase, and Deepening Phase.
3. The types of Forgiveness are as follows:
  - Forgiveness of Revenge
  - Restitution Forgiveness
  - Incredible Forgiveness
  - Legitimate Extraordinary Forgiveness
  - Forgiveness for Social Harmony
  - Forgiveness as a form of action and expression of unconditional love.
4. The solution to be able to provide forgiveness is to develop empathy and forget the painful past and try to only look to the future. Erase all perceptions of the painful incident, let go of all the pain and develop it into generosity and compassion.
5. Recommendation
6. From several other research results, it was found that there are still many people who say sorry only as words which then without further interpreting the meaning of forgiveness itself. It is easy for people to apologize and forgive without being accompanied by wholehearted acceptance. In forgiveness, the ideal is to replace negative attitudes and feelings with positive attitudes, but in reality, this is not done. Forgiveness does not erase all negative feelings but replaces them with positive feelings. Many things can affect a person in the forgiveness process, one of which is empathy. Empathy is a person's ability to understand the feelings and emotions of others and the ability to imagine oneself when in someone else's shoes. Empathy has a major role in shaping human behavior and appears at the age of two or three years. One example of a sign of empathy in babies is that babies will cry when they hear another baby cry or see their mother cry. From the explanation above, it can be concluded that there is a relationship between empathy and forgiveness, where empathy can affect someone in giving forgiveness.

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