

INVESTIGATING MINDFULNESS AND IMPLEMENTATION PLANNING AS
STRATEGIES THAT FACILITATE GRANTING AND SEEKING FORGIVENESS
BEHAVIORS AMONG YOUNG ADULTS

by

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B.A., Baylor University, 2009
M.S., Kansas State University, 2013

AN ABSTRACT OF A DISSERTATION

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Abstract

Previous research suggests that college-age students, namely first-year college individuals, are particularly prone to experience relational conflict. Interpersonal forgiveness has been well-documented as a variable that can reduce relational conflict among young adults. However, limited empirical research to date has explored the motivation and ability of college-age students to engage in forgiveness granting behaviors when they are the victim of an interpersonal conflict; this lack of empirical research is especially prevalent when considering the perpetrator's perspective and *why* (motivation) and *how* (ability) perpetrators engage in forgiveness seeking behaviors following conflict.

Given this gap in previous research, the current dissertation assessed forgiveness granting and forgiveness seeking behaviors for victims and perpetrators of an interpersonal transgression, respectively. Using attitude and behavioral change models as theoretical guides, we exposed young adults to a message pertaining to reasons/motivations for why they should engage in forgiveness behaviors as well as two training techniques (i.e. *mindfulness* and *implementation planning*) that may promote the ability to express granting/seeking forgiveness. Study 1 focused on naturalistic, self-reported transgression experiences occurring within close relationships, while Study 2 focused on a standardized transgression experience occurring in a lab setting.

Across these two studies, we found that participants who were exposed to reasons/motives for forgiveness as well as a mindfulness or implementation planning technique were more likely to engage in forgiveness granting/seeking behaviors than participants who were not exposed to this information. Furthermore, results suggest that the participants' mood and attitudes toward forgiveness granting/seeking were enhanced by receiving both a message and a

training technique. These results were especially pronounced for victims in the mindfulness training conditions for both Study 1 and Study 2.

Overall, our results suggest that receiving both a message emphasizing motives/reasons for forgiveness as well as an easy to implement technique may assist young adults in alleviating severe interpersonal conflict (Study 1) as well as every day, slight transgressions (Study 2). The findings from Study 1 and Study 2 add unique knowledge to previous forgiveness literature and help to inform previous research about the process victims and perpetrators undergo when engaging in forgiveness following relational conflict.

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Chapter 1 - Introduction

The Issue: How do Young Adults Manage Interpersonal Conflict

Interpersonal conflict is one of the most common (Ghaemmaghami, Allemand, & Martin, 2011) and one of the most detrimental stressors an individual can encounter (Almeida & Horn, 2004; Bolger, DeLongis, Kessler, & Schilling, 1989). College-age students, namely first-year of college individuals (i.e., 18-19 years of age), are particularly prone to experience interpersonal conflict (Ross, Niebling, & Heckert, 1999). This may be due to the transitional nature of college-life, such that college-age students are exposed to unique social and relational contexts in which the likelihood of experiencing interpersonal conflict is high. For instance, first-year college students are often required to live in a dormitory room in close proximity to other individuals they have never met. Such living experiences create a naturalistic environment for relational disputes. First-year of college students may also be working to establish social support systems as well as initiate intimate relationships — often, navigating these new relationships and subsequent conflicts that arise can be a challenge for first-year college students. If left unmanaged, interpersonal conflict may result in feelings of loneliness, anxiety, and depression (Ross et al., 1999).

Researchers consider interpersonal conflict to be “a dynamic process that occurs between interdependent parties as they experience negative emotional reactions to perceived disagreements and interferences with the attainment of their goals” (Barki & Hartwick, 2004, p. 234). Types of interpersonal conflict that young adults experience vary. For example, interpersonal conflict may involve slight transgressions, such as more benign, everyday annoyances and frustrations (e.g., confronting a messy/untidy roommate) and/or arguments pertaining to a difference in opinion between close friends. Transgressions also may be more

severe in nature, such as a betrayal of trust and/or excessive criticism experienced between intimate partners. Such conflicts, even if only perceived as being a slight transgression, may result in negative emotions that can include: hostility, resentment, frustration, and/or anger as well as sadness, embarrassment, and/or guilt (Barki & Hartwick, 2004). Interpersonal conflict management strategies also vary. In order to manage the negative feelings and outcomes associated with interpersonal conflict, individuals may employ strategies geared toward avoiding the person who hurt them and/or trying to seek revenge against that person (Enright, 2001); alternatively, individuals may seek to make amends and/or express concern for the other person, as well as try to reduce the negative emotions associated with the interpersonal conflict through forgiveness-related behaviors (e.g., expressing empathy and compassion toward the offender, and/or apologizing for wrongdoings; Worthington, 2005).

Age Differences Associated with Interpersonal Conflict Management

Relevant to the current dissertation, the ability to manage and effectively react to interpersonal conflict may depend partly on an individual's age (Bono & McCullough 2004; Mullet & Girard 2000). Developmental literature posits that as an individual ages, he or she experiences fewer problems within the context of social relationships (Birditt & Fingerman, 2005). Older individuals (typical age range from 40-69 years old) report less distress and negativity within their interpersonal relationships. They also report that their interpersonal relationships are overall less irritating, less demanding, and involve less criticism compared to younger adult relationships (typical age range of 16 to 39 years of age; Akiyama, Antonucci, Takahashi, & Langfahl, 2003; Fingerman & Birditt, 2003; Okun & Keith, 1998; Rook, 1984; Walen & Lachman, 2000). Furthermore, older adults are more likely to report fewer negative emotions (e.g., anger and hostility; Blanchard-Fields & Coats, 2008) and less revenge seeking

behaviors following an interpersonal conflict in comparison to young adults (Ghaemmaghmi et al., 2011).

Although researchers have not yet conclusively identified why this age difference occurs, the ability for older individuals to successfully regulate their emotions and behavioral reactions following interpersonal conflict may serve as one potential explanation (Luong, Charles, & Fingerman, 2010). Older adults are more likely than younger adults to engage in conflict strategies that “optimize positive social experiences and minimize negative ones” (Ghaemmaghmi et al., 2011, p. 193); such strategies have been shown to help alleviate interpersonal conflict (Worthington, 2005) and support healthy relational development (Cosgrove & Konstam, 2008; Toussaint & Webb, 2005). In comparison to older adults, younger adults are more likely to utilize confrontational strategies, such as yelling and/or criticizing that may exacerbate interpersonal conflict (Birditt & Fingerman, 2005). Given the common occurrence of interpersonal conflict among young adults as well as the negative consequences of this conflict for relational and psychological well-being (Cano & O’Leary 2000; Day & Maltby 2005; Kendler, Hettema, Butera, Gardner, & Prescott, 2003), research examining strategies that might assist young adults in regulating their emotions and behaviors in response to an interpersonal transgression should be a priority (Sorkin & Rook, 2006).

The Current Study

The current study focused on the variable of interpersonal forgiveness (i.e., forgiveness granting or forgiveness seeking behaviors that include a single offender; Fehr & Gelfand, 2010) and training techniques, such as mindfulness and implementation planning that may help to alleviate interpersonal conflict among young adults. An important contribution of the current work includes the examination of the effectiveness of these training techniques in promoting

forgiveness-related behaviors for both victims and perpetrators of an interpersonal transgression¹. Research exploring how victims of an interpersonal transgression “go about” granting forgiveness and the strategies that are effective in promoting forgiveness is somewhat limited (Strelan & Wojtysiak, 2009). Moreover, empirical research examining strategies that are effective in encouraging perpetrators of a transgression to seek forgiveness is scarce (Chiaromello, Munoz, & Mullet, 2008; Riek, 2010). This is surprising considering the well-documented benefits (e.g., healthier relational development; better mental health; better physical health) that accompany both forgiveness seeking and forgiveness granting behaviors (Worthington, 2005). Two possibly relevant strategies to encourage granting/seeking forgiveness might be mindfulness and implementation planning.

Mindfulness, also referred to as mindfulness-based acceptance (Baer & Huss, 2008) as well as a form of meditative practice (Feldman, Greeson, & Senville, 2010), is a way to direct attention and awareness to internal and external thoughts, sensations, and emotions in a non-judgmental manner (Baer & Huss, 2008). Mindfulness has been used in previous research as a strategy to help college-age students manage stress (Oman, Shauna, Shapiro, Thoresen, Plante, & Flinders, 2008); however, only two studies (Oman et al., 2008; Shapiro, Oman, Thoresen, Plante, & Flinders, 2008) have empirically investigated the effect of mindfulness training for victims of an interpersonal transgression (i.e., granting forgiveness), while the effect of mindfulness training for perpetrators of a transgression (i.e., seeking forgiveness) has yet to be empirically tested.

¹ The terms “victim” and “perpetrator” were based on terminology used in a large body of prior forgiveness literature. We acknowledge that telling participants to identify as a victim or perpetrator may prime an unintended negative mindset. Thus, when interacting with participants of the current research, we described the transgression experience (e.g., being hurt/wronged/mistreated by someone or hurting/wronging/mistreating someone) as opposed to using the terms victims and perpetrators.

Implementation planning training also is a technique that might serve as a useful strategy for young adults who wish to practice forgiveness granting/seeking behaviors. In accordance with previous research, individuals are more likely to engage in an intentional behavior if they develop and implement a plan for enacting that specific behavior (Gollwitzer, 1993, 1999; Gollwitzer & Sheeran, 2006). Implementation plans allow individuals to concentrate on the specific details of how and when they will engage in a specified behavior. Following an interpersonal transgression experience, an individual who desires to grant/seek forgiveness may formulate simple (yet specific) “if-then” statements in order to plan for future interactions with the offender/victim. For example, a victim of a transgression who desires to resolve the relational conflict and grant forgiveness might create a plan that resembles the following statement: “if (the perpetrator of the transgression) contacts me to apologize, then I will listen (to this person) explain his/her side of the story.” Creating and implementing this plan may make it more likely that the individual will work toward the desired goal when compared to merely forming only a behavioral intention. Little empirical research investigates the role of implementation planning on impacting forgiveness granting and forgiveness seeking behaviors. Thus, the findings of the current study contribute valuable knowledge to previous forgiveness and interpersonal conflict literature.

In order to better understand the theoretical underpinnings of the current study, relevant research surrounding interpersonal forgiveness (including both granting and seeking forgiveness) as well as mindfulness and implementation planning are reviewed in detail.

Review of Forgiveness Literature

Conceptualizations of Granting Forgiveness

To date, there is a lack of consensus among researchers and clinicians regarding an exact definition of granting forgiveness (Leach & Lark, 2004; Riek & Mania, 2012). Some researchers conceptualize forgiveness as a dispositional trait, or an individual's natural tendencies to forgive others (Berry, Worthington, O'Connor, Parrott, & Wade, 2005; Brown, 2003; Brown & Phillips, 2005). Granting forgiveness also has been defined in terms of a process of gradual, pro-social change (McCullough, Bono, & Root, 2007; McCullough, Worthington, & Rachal, 1997; Thoresen, Harris, & Luskin 2000; Worthington & Wade, 1999).

Dispositional tendencies to grant forgiveness. An abundance of research has focused on how people differ in terms of their natural tendencies to forgive others as well as the benefits of being a naturally forgiving person (Berry, Worthington, Parrott, O'Connor, & Wade, 2001; Berry et al., 2005; Brown, 2003). This tendency is often referred to as "forgivingness" (Roberts, 1995), and is considered a stable trait that is consistent over time and across situations. The general response style of individuals who are considered naturally forgiving (high levels of dispositional forgiveness; HDF) may serve as an advantage within the context of interpersonal relationships. High levels of dispositional forgiveness correlate with psychosocial development and conflict resolution (Poston, Hanson, & Schwiebert, 2012). HDF individuals often experience greater harmony within the context of their relationships and report higher levels of compassion and empathy when compared to people with low levels of dispositional forgiveness (LDF; Emmons, 2000). Furthermore, LDF individuals are prone to holding grudges after an interpersonal transgression and exhibit more negative emotions, such as anger, anxiety, and

hostility than HDF individuals. Anger rumination, often in a vengeful or spiteful way, also is common among LDF individuals (Berry et al., 2001).

Although research findings demonstrate that HDF individuals resolve conflict more readily than LDF individuals, this research is quick to acknowledge that general traits are not always the most effective means to predict actual behaviors; knowing the overall level of forgivingness may not allow researchers to predict the actual occurrence of forgiveness-related behaviors, especially when taking into account various relational and situational factors (e.g., type of transgression, severity of the transgression, nature of the relationship; Riek & Mania, 2012). Thus, more recent research has elected to investigate not only forgivingness levels, but also the process through which individuals grant forgiveness (Riek & Mania, 2012).

The process of granting forgiveness. Similar to the forgivingness literature, the process of forgiving others and the benefits of this process for mental and physical health (Harris & Thoresen, 2005), as well as spiritual well-being (Leach & Lark, 2004; Strelan, Acton & Patrick, 2009) are well-documented. Granting forgiveness is recognized as an act freely chosen by the victim (Baskin & Enright, 2004; McCullough et al., 1997). Although granting forgiveness does not relinquish the wrongdoing or accountability of the perpetrator (Toussaint & Webb, 2005), this process enables the victim to alleviate negativity following the transgression. Thus, at a minimum, the process of forgiving others includes reframing negative into more positive thoughts and feelings toward an offender (Enright, Freedman, & Rique, 1998; Thompson et al., 2005; Worthington, Berry, & Parrott, 2001) as well as the reduction of negative behaviors/responses following the interpersonal offense, such as seeking revenge (Enright, 1991; Gassin & Enright, 1995). Of importance for the current research, rumination on behalf of the victim following a transgression is a common occurrence and negatively impacts the overall

forgiveness process (McCullough et al., 2007). Techniques that can help victims to reduce rumination (e.g., repetitive angry/hostile thoughts about the transgression/other person involved) and focus on ways to resolve and/or manage the conflict may help to facilitate forgiveness, and subsequently assist in the reduction of negative thoughts, feelings, and behaviors.

Within the current study, we conceptualized granting forgiveness as a process that includes a wide-range of behaviors. These behaviors included: reframing negative to more positive thoughts, feelings, and behaviors in general and toward the other person involved in the transgression (e.g., replacing hostility and resentment with empathy and/or compassion), and reducing responses that have been shown to hinder the forgiveness granting process, such as the tendency to seek revenge and avoid the other person.

Conceptualizations of Seeking Forgiveness

While there has been considerable empirical research conducted on granting forgiveness, little research has focused on seeking forgiveness (Baumeister, Stillwell, & Wotman, 1991; Chiamello et al., 2008; Riek, 2010; Witvliet, Ludwig, & Bauer, 2002). This is surprising when considering that interpersonal forgiveness by definition involves more than one person; interpersonal forgiveness involves both a victim and a perpetrator. As such, it is crucial that more empirical research be conducted regarding the nature of seeking forgiveness from the perpetrator's point of view. Doing so may potentially increase the likelihood that an interpersonal conflict experience is fully resolved (Riek, 2010). In addition, focusing on both victim and perpetrator perspectives will allow researchers to gain a more accurate picture of the interpersonal forgiveness process as a whole. Of the available research on perpetrators of an interpersonal transgression, seeking forgiveness is commonly measured as both a dispositional trait and process — similar to that of granting forgiveness.

Dispositional tendencies to seek forgiveness. Research investigating dispositional tendencies to seek forgiveness often focuses on the overall willingness of the perpetrator to engage in behaviors that are indicative of asking for forgiveness (e.g., expressing remorse or guilt and/or extending an apology). For instance, Sandage, Worthington, Hight, and Berry (2000) assessed the relationship between tendencies to seek forgiveness (i.e., a perpetrator's willingness to ask for forgiveness) and religiosity, developmental reasoning levels about forgiveness, narcissism, and self-monitoring. Sampling from college-age students, they discovered that the willingness to seek forgiveness was not significantly related to religiosity; however, willingness was positively related to developmental reasoning levels and negatively related to narcissism and self-monitoring. In a similar vein of research, Bassett, Bassett, Lloyd, and Johnson (2006) examined the potential components that comprise the willingness to ask for forgiveness. Their research suggests that three factors are associated with the willingness to ask for forgiveness: 1) levels associated with a hardness of heart (e.g., losing respect/trust/love for the victim following the transgression, 2) efforts made to seek forgiveness (e.g., offering an apology), and 3) the expression of honesty about the situation (e.g., telling the truth about what happened and/or trying to explain the transgression in a caring and constructive manner). As might be expected, Bassett and colleagues (2006) found that when levels of a hardness of heart are low, the perpetrator is willing to engage in seeking forgiveness-behaviors. Moreover, when expressions of honesty about the situation occur, participants reported greater intent to ask for forgiveness.

Relevant to the current research, Chiamello and colleagues (2008) also investigated the willingness of a perpetrator to ask for forgiveness. While investigating a number of factors related to the willingness to seek forgiveness, they found that negative emotions toward the victim and/or situation in general were associated with the inability to willingly seek forgiveness.

Anger and cynicism predicted little willingness to seek forgiveness; however, most notably and more relevant to the current research was the significant finding in regards to a lack of seeking forgiveness and high levels of paranoid tendencies (e.g., a fear of what will happen between the victim and perpetrator once seeking forgiveness is initiated). If negative emotions and a fear related to the outcome of asking for forgiveness hinders the willingness to engage in seeking-forgiveness behaviors, then the current research investigating training techniques (mindfulness and implementation planning) that can help individuals to better regulate their emotions and thoughts/fears about engaging in specified behaviors serves as a unique contribution to previous forgiveness literature. One limitation of the work cited above is a lack of focus on relational and situational characteristics that can also impact the willingness to seek forgiveness (Riek, 2010). Research examining the process of seeking forgiveness addresses these concerns.

The process of seeking forgiveness. An important aspect associated with seeking forgiveness entails the role that the victim plays in the overall process (Enright, 1996). Forgiveness is not something a perpetrator is necessarily entitled to receive. Therefore, forgiveness of an offense must be willingly offered by the victim (Enright, 1996). Seeking forgiveness may include giving a victim of a transgression an appropriate amount of time and space to process the event (Riek, 2010). However, this is not to say that the perpetrator of a transgression is a passive agent or recipient in the granting/seeking forgiveness process. Similar to the victim of a transgression, a perpetrator may feel negative emotions and thoughts following the transgression (Enright, 1996). Reducing these negative thoughts and emotions may be a sign of the forgiveness process. Furthermore, seeking forgiveness may involve the perpetrator actively engaging in behaviors that might facilitate forgiveness taking place, such as attempts to contact the victim. For the purposes of the current research, we measured perpetrators' attempts

to reach out (or lack of reaching out) to the victim in order to assess forgiveness seeking. Some of the measured seeking forgiveness behaviors included: extending an apology (if appropriate), contacting the victim in order to express concern, justifying the transgression, and/or explaining their side of the story. In addition, we measured avoidance behaviors as a means to assess forgiveness seeking.

In relation to the overall process, seeking forgiveness (and subsequently a victim granting forgiveness) is more likely to occur if the perpetrator feels remorse and/or guilt for his or her behavior as well as respect for the offended party (Enright, 1996). For instance, in a study examining interpersonal conflict, participants thought about a current interpersonal transgression in which they upset someone and either felt guilty or did not feel guilty about the transgression. Participants who felt guilt were significantly more likely to apologize to the victim compared to those who did not feel guilt (Baumeister, Stillwell, & Heatherton, 1995).

Another aspect related to the seeking forgiveness process (and similar to the granting process) involves rumination (Enright, 1996). It can be difficult to engage in seeking forgiveness behaviors, because the perpetrator must admit to his or her faults and wrongdoings (Riek, 2010), but this is an important step in the forgiveness process. Enright (1996) developed a model of seeking forgiveness that includes a step-by-step process. Generally speaking, this process first involves a phase of denial in which a perpetrator may not acknowledge that any wrongdoing has occurred. This is then typically followed by a phase of feeling remorse and/or guilt if the perpetrator realizes his or her behaviors have negatively impacted the victim. Following this phase of remorse/guilt, the perpetrator may begin dwelling or ruminating about the situation. Perpetrators might contemplate what to do about the situation as well as how the victim will

react to their attempts to compensate for any wrongdoing. These phases of denial, remorse/guilt, and rumination are known as the uncovering phase of seeking forgiveness (Enright, 1996).

Important for the current research, when perpetrators begin to dwell on the situation this may lead to excessively replaying the event over in their mind. According to Enright (1996), if perpetrators can move beyond this tendency to dwell on the event, then awareness that their behavior led to hurting someone else and the realization that they need to take action to resolve this wrongdoing may become more apparent. Unfortunately, perpetrators may remain in this rumination/dwelling phase too long for a resolution to take place (Enright, 1996). Moving beyond the uncovering phase leads to a new step in the process known as the decision or work phase. During the decision/work phase, a perpetrator may be likely to seek forgiveness, because this phase is characterized by behaviors, thoughts, and attitudes that a perpetrator might express in order to work toward resolving the conflict (e.g., saying “I’m sorry;” contacting the victim to make amends and/or express concern; doing something tangible to compensate for their behavior). Teaching perpetrators useful strategies (i.e., mindfulness and implementation planning) that may help them to navigate the uncovering phase may also subsequently promote the decision/work phase of seeking forgiveness.

The Motivation and Ability to Grant/Seek Forgiveness

The process of granting and seeking forgiveness can often be difficult (Riek, 2010; Younger, Piferi, Jobe, & Lawler, 2004), because these are behaviors that require considerable effort. Importantly, individuals may be more likely to engage in an effortful behavior if they are motivated to perform the behavior and if they believe they possess the ability to perform the behavior (Ajzen, 1985). In an ideal situation, both high motivation and high ability are likely to influence an individual to engage in an effortful behavior. When considering forgiveness, for

someone to grant/seek forgiveness they need reasons why they should engage in these behaviors (e.g., motives/motivations) as well as techniques that may better enable them to engage in these behaviors (e.g., the ability to express the specified behavior). Without the proper motivation and ability to grant/seek forgiveness, these behaviors may be lacking following interpersonal conflict.

Several theories focused on predicting behaviors, most notably the Elaboration Likelihood Model of persuasion (ELM; Petty & Cacioppo, 1986a; 1986b), the Heuristic-Systematic Model (HSM; Chaiken, 1980), and the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB; Ajzen, 1985), emphasize the importance of taking into account an individual's motivation and ability related to the desired behavioral outcome. For example, the ELM suggests that in order for an individual to engage in a deliberate decision to enact a specified behavior, certain conditions must be satisfied. That is, an individual must have both the motivation and the ability to deliberately consider the behavior and choose to implement the behavior (Petty & Cacioppo, 1986a; 1986b). Similarly, the HSM suggests that motivation and ability play a key role in an individual's effort to maintain "systematic" processing in relation to specified behaviors (Chen & Chaiken, 1999, p. 81). For instance, this model indicates that individuals tend to make minimal efforts to process information related to a specified behavior unless they are motivated to do so otherwise (Chaiken, Liberman, & Eagly, 1989; Chen & Chaiken, 1999). Further, the TPB indicates that there are two important factors to consider when predicting effortful behaviors. First, we must consider the individual's attitudes and opinions about the behavior, including her/his own attitudes/opinions about the anticipated outcomes (e.g., benefits and costs of the behavior). These beliefs serve as motivations or reasons for a behavior. Second, we must consider the individual's perceived ability to implement or carryout the behavior. According to

the TPB, when an individual's motivation and ability are high, the likelihood of performing an effortful behavior increases (Ajzen, 1985, 2011).

Each theory above indicates that considering an individual's attitude or motivation alone is not enough to predict a behavioral outcome, the individual must also feel that she/he can implement the behavior. Applying these frameworks as a theoretical guide, it is possible to identify forgiveness-relevant motivations and ability factors that might influence whether an individual engages in granting/seeking forgiveness following an interpersonal transgression.

Motivations to Grant/Seek Forgiveness

Drawing from the theories above, individuals might be more likely to engage in the effortful behavior of granting/seeking forgiveness if they are motivated to express these behaviors. Two potential factors that may motivate someone to grant/seek forgiveness include his or her attitudes/opinions about the behavior (e.g., the anticipated outcomes or benefits that are associated with the behavior) as well as the attitudes/opinions of others (e.g., what does society say about granting/seeking forgiveness).

When offered, interpersonal forgiveness can provide victims and perpetrators with certain benefits, such as enhanced psychological well-being (Karremans, Van Lange, Ouwerkerk, & Kluwer, 2003; Orcutt, 2006; Toussaint & Webb, 2005), greater physical health (Harris & Thoresen, 2005; Lawler et al., 2003; Witvliet, Ludwig, & Vander Laan, 2001; Witvliet, Phipps, Feldman, & Beckham, 2004), as well as decreased hostility and resentment (Witvliet et al., 2001). However, despite these positive benefits, individuals do not always grant/seek forgiveness. Given that forgiveness seeking and granting involves letting go of resentment, individuals who do not forgive may do so because they believe the act of forgiveness is something costly for them personally (Exline, Baumeister, Bushman, Campbell, & Finkel, 2004).

They may also not be aware of the benefits that forgiveness granting/seeking can entail (Jeter & Brannon, 2015). In a recent study, college-age students reported that they possessed limited familiarity with the idea that interpersonal forgiveness can be good for mental and physical health; however, these same participants indicated that this idea was a compelling/persuasive motive to engage in interpersonal forgiveness (Jeter & Brannon, 2015). If young adults believe that their health will improve following acts of granting/seeking forgiveness, then they might be more likely to engage in these behaviors. Thus, informing young adults of these potential health benefits may influence their motivation to grant/seek forgiveness.

In addition to the anticipated benefits of interpersonal forgiveness, attitudes of young adults may also be influenced by societal expectations associated with granting/seeking forgiveness behaviors (Jeter & Brannon, 2015). For example, if societal standards dictate favorable attitudes/opinions toward a behavior (e.g., granting/seeking forgiveness is the moral or ethical thing to do following an interpersonal transgression), then an individual might be more motivated to engage in the specified behavior. Young adults are familiar with the societal view that forgiveness is the “right thing to do.” In fact, college-age students are more familiar with the societal expectation that forgiveness is the right thing to do than the idea that forgiveness benefits mental and physical health (Jeter & Brannon, 2015). Young adults also find this societal expectation to be a compelling motive to engage in interpersonal forgiveness. Therefore, these relational and socially prescribed expectations may play a role in influencing the behavioral intent to grant/seek forgiveness.

Overall, previous research indicates that the more motivations a person has for a behavior, the more likely he or she will be to perform the behavior (Fishbein & Ajzen, 2005); specifically, having several motivations to grant/seek forgiveness may increase the likelihood of

forgiveness occurring. As such, the current research exposed both victims and perpetrators to a message with information related to the health benefits of forgiveness as well societal expectations that may motivate grant/seeking forgiveness behaviors. However, it is important to reiterate that motivations and attitudes alone are not sufficient to predict a specified behavioral outcome. The perceived ability to engage in the behavior must also be considered.

Ability to Grant/Seek Forgiveness

Previous research suggests that when an individual's perceived ability to implement a behavior is high, the expected result is the implementation of that behavior (Gollwitzer, 1993). If an individual's perceived ability in expressing the behavior is hindered (i.e., the individual experiences obstacles or challenges associated with the behavior, a lack of resources, and/or lack of opportunity to implement the behavior), then the likelihood of performing the behavior decreases (Gollwitzer, 1993). In relation to the current research, helping young adults to establish and practice effective techniques that are relevant to the desired behavior and are easy to implement (such as mindfulness or implementation planning) may influence them to engage in granting/seeking forgiveness following an interpersonal transgression.

Mindfulness-based training. The origin of mindfulness has roots in ancient Buddhist practice (Baer & Huss, 2008; Siegel, Germer, & Olendzki, 2009) and was initially taught as a component of the Noble Eightfold Path as a way to manage suffering (Webb, Phillips, Bumgarner, & Conway-Williams, 2013). When applied as a psychological construct, mindfulness serves as a mechanism for individuals to practice being alert (or aware) and attune to whatever is taking place in the "here-and-now" (Webb et al., 2013, p. 236). Individuals who practice mindfulness are encouraged to remain open to internal and external sensations, thoughts, and feelings in a non-judgmental and non-responsive/reactive manner. Importantly, the practice

of mindfulness is different from rumination; mindfulness involves having and acknowledging thoughts, feelings, and sensations without dwelling, while rumination involves a process of obsessing, overthinking, and/or overanalyzing thoughts, feelings, and sensations. Prior research indicates that ruminating/obsessing often leads to unproductive outcomes, such as anger (Rusting & Nolen-Hoeksema, 1998) and decreased mental health (Segerstorm, Tsao, Alden, & Craske, 2000).

Similar to both granting and seeking forgiveness behaviors, mindfulness can be measured as a dispositional trait that is relatively consistent across time (Bishop et al., 2004; Brown & Ryan, 2003). Previous research testing the effect of mindfulness on emotion regulation and health-related outcomes suggests that mindfulness also may be measured as something that can be taught and applied to encompass a wide-variety of situational and relational contexts (Webb et al., 2013). Together, this research shows that individuals who are trained in mindfulness-based techniques are better able to regulate their emotions and experience significant decreases in negative rumination thoughts and behaviors (Deyo, Wilson, Ong, & Koopman, 2009; Kumar, Feldman, & Hayes, 2008; Ramel, Goldin, Carmona, & McQuaid, 2004). A more recent study conducted by Feldman and colleagues (2010) garners further support for these findings. They conducted an empirical study to assess the effect of a mindfulness breathing exercise on the experience of repetitive thoughts and negative emotional reactions (e.g., worry, anxiety, and self-criticism). Sampling from 190 undergraduate students, the researchers trained participants to use a mindfulness breathing technique (as well as two other mindfulness-related techniques, expressing love and kindness and progressive muscle relaxation) within a laboratory setting. The results indicate that participants who were trained to practice the mindfulness breathing

technique reported reduced negative reactivity to repetitive thoughts (e.g., anger rumination) as well as a greater ability to view internal experiences with objectivity.

The link between mindfulness-based training and better emotion regulation may extend to aspects of forgiveness; however, only two empirical studies to our knowledge have examined the effect of mindfulness training programs on granting forgiveness (Oman et al., 2008; Shapiro et al., 2008). Research conducted by Oman and colleagues (2008) demonstrates that following an 8-week mindfulness based training program, participants (college-age students; age range = 18-24) who received training reported less overall stress, rumination, and increased forgiveness granting behaviors. However, in a similar study with similar methodology, Shapiro and colleagues (2008) did not find support for the previous finding that mindfulness-training directly influenced rumination and granting forgiveness behaviors.

Limited empirical research on this topic makes it hard to establish if mindfulness training can in fact promote forgiveness granting behaviors. Furthermore, how mindfulness training impacts seeking forgiveness has yet to be empirically examined. If mindfulness training does influence emotion regulation and forgiveness-related behaviors, then perhaps this technique would fit within the realm of perceived ability to implement an effortful behavior. That is, if mindfulness is one technique to encourage forgiveness granting and seeking behaviors, individuals may be more inclined to engage in these behaviors because they have an easy to implement technique to practice.

Implementation planning training. Forming a behavioral intention has been linked to implementation planning. Namely, behavioral intentions might be achieved by formulating a plan to carry out the desired behaviors (Achtziger, Gollwitzer, & Sheeran, 2008). These plans are typically structured as “if-then” statements, pertain to specific stimuli or situations an individual

may encounter in relation to the behavioral intention, and include strategies for how an individual will express a certain cognitive or behavioral response. To form an implementation intention, an individual should identify a future goal specific situational cue (i.e., the if-component) and plan a response to that cue (i.e., the then-component; Gollwitzer, 1999). For example, “I intend to initiate the goal-directed behavior x when situation y is encountered” (Gollwitzer, 1993, p. 142).

Implementation plans are expressed through an automatic process, such that after rehearsal of the developed plan, less conscious effort is needed to express the desired goal when faced with the stimulus/situation specified in the if-then statement; this holds true specifically when comparing individuals who develop implementation plans compared to individuals who do not develop such plans (Gollwitzer, 1993, 1999). Thus, creating and rehearsing an implementation plan serves a purpose in establishing and maintaining habits that correspond with a desired/intended behavior (Verplanken & Faes, 1999).

Similar to mindfulness-based trainings, implementation planning has been examined in contexts in which negative thoughts and feelings occur. More specifically, this research investigates how forming a plan can reduce negative thoughts and feelings (e.g., worry and anger) that may reduce the likelihood of achieving a set goal. In a study of 107 tennis players (average age = 34 years old), Achtziger and colleagues (2008) found that players who formed specific “if-then” statements prior to a tennis game later rated their performance during the game better. These findings highlight that forming the “if-then” plans (e.g., I will calm myself down if/when I start feeling upset or angry during the game) enhanced the overall rate of accomplishing a desired goal. Overall, the researchers concluded that the “if-then” statements not

only enabled players to begin the process of goal striving, but also helped prevent the players from “straying the course” when pursuing a desired outcome (p. 381).

In terms of forming an intention to grant/seek forgiveness, formulating an implementation plan may make this effortful behavior less difficult; however, a lack of research has examined the effectiveness of implementation planning on granting and seeking forgiveness following an interpersonal transgression. Thus, the current study will tested whether generating an implementation plan will promote an individual’s perceived ability to express forgiveness-related behaviors.

Summary of the Current Dissertation

The current research assessed granting/seeking forgiveness behaviors for victims and perpetrators of an interpersonal transgression. Using attitude and behavioral change models as theoretical guides, we exposed young adults to reasons why they should engage in forgiveness behaviors. Namely, we provided a message that highlights three motivations to grant/seeking forgiveness: 1) granting/seeking forgiveness is beneficial for mental health, 2) granting/seeking forgiveness is beneficial for physical health, and 3) granting/seeking forgiveness is upheld by society as the moral or ethical thing to do. We exposed young adults to effective training techniques (i.e., mindfulness and implementation planning) to better enable them to express granting/seeking forgiveness behaviors. We expanded on previous forgiveness literature by conducting two studies that uniquely investigate forgiveness granting/seeking within the context of self-reported interpersonal transgressions (Study 1), as well as within the context of a standardized interpersonal transgression (Study 2).

Study 1

Study 1 focused on naturalistic, self-reported transgression experiences occurring within close relationships. One goal of Study 1 was to assess the effectiveness specific forgiveness techniques in promoting forgiveness granting behaviors for victims of an interpersonal transgression and forgiveness seeking behaviors for perpetrators of an interpersonal transgression. Another goal of Study 1 was to investigate whether the presence of a training technique (mindfulness or implementation planning) paired with a message about the importance of granting/seeking forgiveness would influence participants' attitudes about granting/seeking forgiveness as well as their general mood and mood toward the other person involved in the transgression.

Study 2

In Study 2, we assessed the same forgiveness message and training techniques of mindfulness and implementation planning; however, these factors were assessed within the context of a standardized transgression experience. The standardized transgression took place in a laboratory setting, and allowed us to control for contextual factors, such as the type of transgression, the severity of the transgression, and relationship closeness that may have been present during Study 1. Participants engaged in a distribution of resources task (Carlisle et al., 2012) in order to simulate the experience of a transgression for both victims and perpetrators. This task was designed to allow participants an opportunity to engage in forgiveness granting/seeking-related behaviors. Thus, we not only collected self-reported measures related to forgiveness behaviors in Study 2, but also measured actual granting/seeking forgiveness behaviors.

Chapter 2 - Study 1

Overview

The purpose of Study 1 was to investigate the unique effect of a forgiveness message (supporting the benefits of granting/seeking forgiveness and societal expectations) as well as mindfulness and implementation planning training on forgiveness granting behaviors and forgiveness seeking behaviors. Study 1 focused on recent, naturalistic, self-reported transgression experiences occurring within close relationships. To fill a gap in previous research, we investigated the effectiveness of the forgiveness message and forgiveness training techniques for both victims of an interpersonal transgression and perpetrators of an interpersonal transgression.

Study 1 consisted of four training conditions in which participants were randomly assigned to either receive 1) a forgiveness message, 2) a forgiveness message and mindfulness training, 3) a forgiveness message and implementation planning training, or 4) a control condition (no message and no training). One goal of Study 1 was to compare the effectiveness of the training manipulations in promoting forgiveness granting behaviors for victims of a transgression and forgiveness seeking behaviors for perpetrators of a transgression. An additional purpose of Study 1 was to assess whether the presence of a training technique (i.e., ability factor related to behavioral outcomes) paired with a message about the importance of granting/seeking forgiveness (i.e., motivational factors related to behavioral outcomes) would influence the participant's attitudes about forgiveness (including the participant's own attitudes/opinions about the anticipated outcomes related to granting/seeking forgiveness and perceived ability to grant/seek forgiveness). The final goal of Study 1 was to assess the effectiveness of the

forgiveness message and training manipulations in promoting positive overall/general mood and positive mood toward the other person involved in the interpersonal conflict.

Hypotheses and Research Questions

Hypothesis 1: The forgiveness message condition, mindfulness/message condition, and planning/message condition will be more influential than the control condition in promoting forgiveness granting/forgiveness seeking behaviors.

Research Question: Is one training condition (message only; mindfulness/message; planning/message) more effective than the others at encouraging victims/perpetrators to grant/seek forgiveness?

Hypothesis 2: Participants in the message-only, mindfulness/message and planning/message conditions will report more favorable attitudes about granting/seeking forgiveness compared to the control group.

Research Question: Is one condition (message only; mindfulness/message; planning/message) more effective than the others at promoting positive attitudes about granting/seeking forgiveness?

Hypothesis 3: The forgiveness message condition, mindfulness/message condition, and planning/message condition will be more influential than the control condition in promoting a more positive general mood and more positive mood toward the other person involved in the transgression experience.

Research Question: Is one training condition (message-only; mindfulness/message; planning/message) more effective than the others at influencing general mood and mood toward the other person involved in the transgression?

Study 1:

Method

Participants

To recruit both victims and perpetrators of an interpersonal transgression occurring within a close relationship, we utilized the departmental mass screening process. Participants who completed the mass screening answered questions pertaining to a recent interpersonal conflict situation in which they were either hurt/wronged (victim) or hurt/wronged someone close to them (perpetrator). Participants responded to questions about the nature of the conflict², the other person involved, the severity of hurt experienced, and if they had resolved the conflict in terms of granting/seeking forgiveness (Appendix A). In accordance with previous research (Oman et al., 2008; Shapiro et al., 2008), we required that participants experienced a transgression within the past 6 months. Individuals who recently experienced a transgression (either as a perpetrator or a victim) and had yet to resolve the conflict (i.e., not offered forgiveness to the other person; not asked for forgiveness from the other person) were recruited for Study 1. In addition to recruiting participants from the mass screening, we also advertised the study using a University sign-up system, SONA, to recruit from the larger participant pool of Introductory Psychology students (Appendix B).

Based on previous research (Oman et al., 2008; Shapiro et al., 2008) testing the effects of a training technique on promoting forgiveness granting behaviors for victims as well as the design for Study 1, we recruited 160 undergraduate students (approximately 20 victims and 20

² For the current research, we were primarily interested in recruiting participants who had experienced a severe transgression (but not to the level of a trauma). In fact, none of the participants who were recruited for Study 1 experienced a traumatic transgression, such as physical or psychological abuse.

perpetrators per condition). Following standard data cleaning procedures (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2013), we removed nine participants from subsequent data analyses via listwise deletion. On average, these nine participants only completed 50 items of the survey (~20% of the overall study variables). We created standardized scores for each variable and compared these scores to the convention of +/- 3.29 (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2013). Seven scores exceeded this convention and constituted more than 2% of the sample (Cohen, Cohen, West, & Aiken, 2003); therefore, these scores were not used in the analyses that follow for Study 1.

The final data set included 144 participants (72% female) with an average age of 18.9 years ($SD = .45$). A majority of the participants (84%) self-identified as Caucasian (followed by 5% Hispanic/Latino/a; 4% African-American; 4% Asian; 3% Bi-racial) and first year college classification (71%).

Materials and Measures

Message about forgiveness. Participants in the technique (mindfulness or implementation planning) plus message conditions and the message-only condition were given information that communicates the importance of granting/seeking forgiveness following an interpersonal transgression (Appendix C); this message was tailored to fit either the victim's perspective or perpetrator's perspective. The forgiveness message included two key elements related to the motivations to grant/seeking forgiveness. First, the message stressed the importance of forgiveness as an altruistic behavior that most religious, ethical, and social systems promote (i.e., societal attitudes/opinions about the behavior). Second, the message emphasized that holding a grudge, ruminating about a transgression, and harboring negative emotions, such as hostility and anger can be bad for the participant's mental and physical health (i.e., benefits of granting/seeking forgiveness). Previous research (Jeter & Brannon, 2015)

utilizing these messages indicates that college-age students find the altruistic and egoism reasoning relevant and compelling motives to engage in forgiveness-related behaviors.

Training conditions. Participants were randomly assigned to one of the four conditions. Participants in the control condition did not receive a forgiveness message and did not participate in a training technique.

Mindfulness technique. A brief description of mindfulness (Appendix D) was given to participants in this training condition. This description emphasized that the main goal of engaging in mindfulness is to produce emotional calm, mental clarity, self-awareness, and/or concentration. Information also was provided in the description about mindfulness training potentially helping the participant cope with negative thoughts and emotions (e.g., hostility and resentment from a victim's perspective, or shame and guilt from a perpetrator's perspective) related to interpersonal conflict by allowing these thoughts and emotions to pass in a non-judgmental manner. After reading this training information, participants practiced mindfulness through a guided example. A pre-written script (adapted from Feldman et al., 2010) was read to the participants (Appendix E). This script asked the participant to close his/her eyes and switch from the usual mode of doing to a mode of non-doing, of simply being. Participants were asked to imagine a situation in which either a close friend violates their trust by sharing confidential information the participant specifically asked this person not to share (victim perspective), or the participant violates the trust of a close friend by sharing confidential information the friend asked the participant not to share (perpetrator perspective); this hypothetical transgression experience is part of the Transgression Narrative Test of Forgiveness and was chosen based on the high likelihood that college-age students have experienced and can relate to a similar situation (Berry et al., 2001). After imagining the hypothetical situation (i.e., imagining how they would feel

given this hypothetical situation), participants were asked to engage in a mindfulness breathing exercise for a period of five minutes.

Implementation planning technique. Similar to the mindfulness training condition, a researcher provided a brief description of the implementation planning technique to participants (Appendix D). This description highlighted that when an individual experiences an interpersonal conflict (from both the victim's and perpetrator's perspective) he/she might experience negative thoughts and feelings (e.g., hostility and resentment from a victim's perspective, or shame and guilt from a perpetrator's perspective) as a result of the transgression. To overcome these negative thoughts and feelings, participants can create action plans pertaining to the interpersonal transgression. This action plan may include making "if-then" statements about feelings or behaviors that may result from the transgression experience, such as "if I feel angry toward _____, then I will _____" or "if I see _____ in public, then I will _____." Following the instructions on a pre-written script (Appendix E), participants were asked to imagine the same hypothetical scenario used in the mindfulness training condition and then create "if-then" statements related to the hypothetical situation. Participants were given approximately five minutes to design these "if-then" statements.

Message-only and control conditions. Participants in the message-only and control condition were told that they would complete a survey about their experiences handling a recent, interpersonal transgression. In order to get participants in the mind-set of thinking about a recent transgression, they imagined the same hypothetical situation used in the mindfulness and implementation planning conditions (Appendix E); however, these participants received no training. They were asked to sit quietly for approximately five minutes (a similar amount of time for the training techniques) after imagining the hypothetical situation. We instructed participants

in the message-only and control condition to sit quietly (after the presentation of the hypothetical scenario and questions related to their transgression experience) for two reasons. First, we did not want participants to complete a filler task during this time as we thought this would serve as a distraction that did not allow for the simultaneous thinking about the transgression. Second, we did not ask participants to continue to think about the transgression intensely for a five minute period because this may have created demand (e.g., potentially inflating negative affect compared to what they would usually experience when thinking of the transgression).

Manipulation check questions. Participants in each condition (control, message-only, mindfulness, and planning) were asked two manipulation check questions related to the hypothetical scenario presented at the beginning of the study: “I can relate to this scenario” (1 = strongly disagree, 5 = strongly agree), and “I would find this scenario to be a severe transgression” (1 = strongly disagree, 5 = strongly agree). Participants were able to relate to the hypothetical scenario ($M = 3.68$, $SE = .12$) and found this transgression to be severe in nature ($M = 3.97$, $SE = .11$).

Furthermore, participants in the mindfulness and planning conditions completed two manipulation check questions in order to assess if they understood what they were being asked to do in the training conditions and if they complied with the researcher’s request: “To what extent do you feel the instructions provided were clear enough for you to understand what you were being asked to do?” (1 = not at all, 5 = great extent), and “To what extent did you follow the instructions?” (1 = not at all, 5 = great extent). Participants reported that the instructions given by the researcher were clear enough to understand ($M = 3.95$, $SE = .05$) and that they followed these instructions ($M = 3.87$, $SE = .06$), as evidenced by the average score for each item exceeding the mid-point of the scale. Finally, participants in the training conditions were asked to rate their

prior experience practicing the training technique used: “I have practiced mindfulness (or planning) prior to this study” (1 = never, 5 = very frequently). On average, participants in the mindfulness ($M = 1.12$, $SE = .27$) and planning ($M = 2.38$, $SE = .27$) conditions had limited prior experience performing these two techniques.

Dependent Measures

Forgiveness granting/seeking behaviors. Five total forgiveness behaviors were measured. Forgiveness granting and seeking was measured through the absence of negative thoughts, feelings, and behaviors, the presence of positive thoughts, feelings, and behaviors, and avoidance behaviors. Items measuring these behaviors were modified to fit the victim’s perspective and the perpetrator’s perspective. Furthermore, revenge-seeking was measured on behalf of victims (Enright, 1991; Gassin & Enright, 1995) and reaching out to the other person (referred to as reconciliation attempts) was measured on behalf of perpetrators (Enright, 1996). Participants rated these items using a 5-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree, 5 = strongly agree).

The *Forgiveness Scale* (Eaton & Struthers, 2006; Appendix F) measured forgiveness granting/seeking behaviors through both the absence of negative thoughts, feelings, and behaviors (TFB; e.g., releasing resentment, anger, and hostility) as well as the presence of positive thoughts, feelings, and behaviors (TFB; e.g., expressing compassion and empathy toward the other person). Participants responded to eight items that assessed the absence of negative TFB ($\alpha = .65$). Example items include: “I think that this person’s wrongful actions (my wrongful actions) have kept me from enjoying life (reverse scored);” “I’ll feel resentful toward the person who wronged me/I wronged” (reverse scored); and “I’ll feel hatred whenever I think about the person who wronged me/I wronged” (reverse scored). Participants responded to eight

items that measured the presence of positive TFB ($\alpha = .72$). Example items include: “I’ll wish for good things to happen to the person who wronged me/I wronged;” “I’ll hope the person who wronged me/I wronged is treated fairly by others in the future;” and “I’ll have compassion for the person who wronged me/I wronged.”

An index score was created to calculate one overall score for the presence of positive thoughts, feelings, and behaviors for both victims and perpetrators. This score was calculated by taking the sum of positive TFB and the absence of negative TFB.

The *Transgression-Related Interpersonal Motivations Scale* (McCullough et al., 1998; Appendix G) was used to assess avoidance behaviors for both victims and perpetrators as well as behaviors thought to be specific/characteristic reactions to a transgression for either victims or perpetrators. More specifically, revenge-seeking behaviors for victims of a transgression and reconciliation attempts (reaching out to the other person) for perpetrators of a transgression.

All participants responded to six items assessing avoidance behaviors (e.g., “I’ll keep as much distance as possible from the person who hurt me/I hurt;” “I’ll avoid the person who hurt me/I hurt;” and “I’ll withdraw from the person who hurt me/I hurt.” These items were averaged together in order to create a composite score of avoidance behaviors ($\alpha = .80$).

Participants self-identifying as victims responded to five items that measured the desire to seek revenge against the other person involved in the transgression (e.g., “I’ll make him/her pay;” “I wish that something bad would happen to him/her;” and “I want him/her to get what he/she deserves”). These five items were averaged together and a composite score was created for revenge-seeking behaviors for victims ($\alpha = .79$).

Participants self-identifying as perpetrators of a transgression completed five items that measured reconciliation attempts (e.g., “I’ll try to make amends with the person I hurt;” “I’ll call

the person I hurt to try and reconcile;” and “I’ll express concern toward the person I hurt”). These items were averaged to calculate a composite score for the desire to reconcile with the other person involved in the transgression ($\alpha = .66$).

Attitudes about granting/seeking forgiveness. We collected information about the participant’s attitudes about granting/seeking forgiveness (i.e., expected outcomes of granting/seeking forgiveness and perceived ability to grant forgiveness/seek forgiveness; Appendix H). Each item measuring the participant’s attitudes was rated on a 5-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree, 5 = strongly agree).

To measure attitudes toward the anticipated outcomes of granting/seeking forgiveness, we utilized items from a well-established forgiveness attitude scales, the *Personal Costs and Benefits of Forgiveness Scale* (Exline et al., 2004). This scale measures attitudes and outcomes related to the forgiveness process. Participants completed eight items that measured the attitudes toward the anticipated benefits of granting/seeking forgiveness. Example items for the anticipated benefits of granting/seeking forgiveness included: “I would feel better about myself if I forgave/I asked for forgiveness;” “anger would decrease if forgiveness took place/if I asked for forgiveness;” “it is admirable to be a forgiving person/person who asks for forgiveness;” and “I believe that forgiving/asking for forgiveness is a moral virtue.” Participants also responded to nine items measuring anticipated costs of granting/seeking forgiveness. Example items for the anticipated costs of forgiveness include: “I would feel like I was getting less than I deserved if I forgave/asked for forgiveness;” “forgiving/asking for forgiveness can cause emotional problems like depression;” “forgiveness/asking for forgiveness is a sign of weakness;” and “I would feel less respect for myself afterwards if I forgave/ I asked for forgiveness.” Composite scores for the

anticipated benefits of forgiveness (more favorable attitudes; $\alpha = .80$) and anticipated costs of forgiveness (less favorable attitudes; $\alpha = .68$) were calculated.

Four separate items developed by Norman (2011) were used to measure a victim's/perpetrator's attitude toward his/her perceived ability to implement forgiveness granting/seeking behaviors (i.e., control beliefs; Appendix H). These items included: "I feel in complete control over whether or not I forgive the person who hurt me/seek forgiveness from the person I hurt," "It is up to me whether or not I forgive the person who hurt me/seek forgiveness from the person I hurt," "If I wanted to, I could easily forgive the person who hurt me/seek forgiveness from the person I hurt," and "I am confident that I can forgive the person who hurt me/seek forgiveness from the person who hurt me." A composite score for control beliefs was calculated by taking the average of the four items above ($\alpha = .93$).

Mood. Participants completed twenty items from the Positive and Negative Affect Scale (PANAS; Watson, Clark & Tellegen, 1988; Appendix I) in order to measure their general mood while completing the study (e.g., interested; irritable; hostile; ashamed; attentive) on a 5-point Likert scale (1 = very slightly or not at all, 5 = extremely). Participants also completed sixteen items to assess their mood toward the other person involved in the interpersonal conflict (e.g., angry; resentful; empathetic; happy; sympathetic; Carlisle et al., 2012; Appendix I). Participants rated these emotions toward the other person on a 5-point Likert type scale (1 = I feel very little of this emotion, 5 = I feel an extreme amount of this emotion). An index score was calculated for overall positive mood by taking the difference between positive mood ($\alpha = .88$) and negative mood ($\alpha = .83$). A similar index score was developed for positive mood toward the other person involved in the transgression by taking the difference between positive mood toward that person ($\alpha = .76$) and negative mood toward that person ($\alpha = .80$).

Additional measures. In order to learn more about the nature of the transgression participants experienced as well as if the participants were currently undergoing the forgiveness process, we asked participants to complete descriptive information about the transgression, such as the nature of the transgression, the relationship with the other person involved, and the severity of the transgression (Enright 2001; Riek, 2010; Riek & Mania, 2012).

Transgression-specific items. Participants responded to six items to measure descriptive information related to the transgression situation they recently experienced (Appendix J). These items pertained to the identity of the other person involved in the interpersonal conflict [co-worker; distant family member (e.g., aunt, uncle, cousin, in-law); immediate family member (e.g., parents, siblings, grandparents, children); friend; roommate; romantic partner, etc.], the nature of the transgression (abuse; betrayal; violation of trust; criticisms; disappointment; lies; rejection; unfaithfulness), the severity of hurt experienced (not at all severe/extremely severe), and how long ago the transgression occurred. Participants also indicated if they had forgiven the transgressor/asked for forgiveness from the victim, and if they had not, how interested they were in doing so (not at all/extremely); this question served as a measure to ensure that participants were currently working to resolve an interpersonal transgression (participants who had already forgiven/been forgiven were not included in the data analyses).

Procedure

After obtaining research approval from the University's Institutional Review Board, participants who completed the departmental pre-screening as well as Introductory Psychology undergraduate students who met the requirements of the current study (i.e., either a victim or perpetrator of an interpersonal transgression within the past six months) were recruited for Study 1. Using previous research as a frame of reference, the current study was described on SONA (a

university research sign-up system) as a general investigation of forgiveness in order to reduce potential sampling biases (Appendix B; Jeter & Brannon, 2015). A majority of the participants who completed Study 1 generally did so within the same week of first registering for the study. Although it is possible that participants may have resolved the conflict before completing the study, it was not likely given the short amount of time between registering (signing-up on SONA) and completing the study.

Assignment to condition. A graphic displaying the procedural order of each condition is displayed in Figure 1. The study began in a lab-setting with approximately 8 to 10 students participating in each session (Feldman et al., 2010). Students were randomly assigned to one of the four conditions (mindfulness/message condition; implementation planning/message condition; message-only condition; control condition). All participants within one study session were exposed to the same condition. Participants were evenly spaced around the lab room and completed the study at their own desk to ensure privacy. The study sessions took place Monday through Friday at various times throughout the day.

Opening instructions. At the beginning of each session, participants were given an informed consent that clearly outlined the purpose of the research, a statement of confidentiality, as well as any risks and benefits of completing the study. After completing the informed consent, participants answered questions related to demographic information (Appendix K). Next, a researcher instructed participants that the study would focus on a recent interpersonal transgression in which they were hurt by someone close to them (victim perspective) or they hurt someone close to them (perpetrator perspective). All participants were made aware that part of the study would involve imagining the recent transgression experience and answering questions related to this experience.

Forgiveness message. Participants in the technique/message conditions (i.e., mindfulness/message and planning/message) and message-only condition were given a paper copy of the informational message about the importance of managing interpersonal conflict (Appendix C). Participants in the technique/message conditions were then told that they would practice a technique during the study that may help them better manage relational conflict. Participants in the control condition were told that managing interpersonal conflict is important for healthy relational development; however, they were not given the forgiveness message or information pertaining to techniques for conflict management.

Technique training. With the exception of participants in the message-only and control conditions, a researcher described the randomly assigned technique to participants using a description script (Appendix D). The researcher then provided participants with a hard copy of the instructions for practicing their assigned technique (Appendix E). Researchers read these instructions out-loud and participants were encouraged to follow along. Each participant practiced the assigned technique using a hypothetical (albeit relevant/applicable) scenario; the scenario was tailored to fit the perspective of either a victim or a perpetrator of a transgression.

After practicing the training technique, participants completed manipulation check questions about the clarity of the training instructions and their compliance in practicing the technique. Following the practice session for the assigned technique, participants responded to questions related to a recent transgression experience in which they were either the victim or perpetrator (Appendix J).

Applying the assigned technique to specific transgression experience. Using a script similar to the practice session, participants in the technique/message conditions were then asked to practice the assigned technique they previously learned on the real, self-reported transgression

experience. They were instructed to visualize the transgression experience and practice the assigned technique for approximately five minutes. Participants in the message-only and control conditions were instructed to imagine the real transgression experience, however, these participants sat quietly for approximately five minutes while the researcher prepared for the final portion of the study.

Participants from each condition then completed a survey packet. This packet included items assessing their general mood and mood toward the other person involved in the transgression experience as well as forgiveness granting/seeking behaviors, and attitudes toward granting/seeking forgiveness.

Closing instructions. A debriefing form was given to each participant at the end of the study. This form provided more information about the study variables as well as contact information for the IRB chair, lead researcher, and local counseling services.

Study 1: Results

One hundred and forty-four participants were used in the data analyses that follow. Based on the descriptive information gathered about the transgression, we found that a majority (94%) of the participants reported experiencing a recent (within the last 6 months) interpersonal transgression in which they self-identified as being either a victim (N = 73) or a perpetrator (N = 71). Participants reported that a close friend (40.5%) or romantic partner (34%) was involved in the transgression experience. For victims, the transgression experience involved a betrayal/violation of trust (40%) and/or disappointment (34%) perpetrated by a close friend or romantic partner. For perpetrators, the transgression experience involved a betrayal/violation of trust (22%), criticism (17%), disappointment (22%), and/or lied (16%) to a close friend or romantic partner. The severity of the transgression experience was rated by both victims and

perpetrators as being hurtful enough to elicit granting/seeking forgiveness ($M = 4.31$, $SE = .11$); however, participants reported that they had not yet fully resolved the transgression ($M = 2.57$, $SE = .12$), but that they were interested in doing so ($M = 4.71$, $SE = .12$).

Data Analytic Strategy

Study 1 primarily consisted of a 2 (transgression role: victim/perpetrator) x 4 (condition: control, message-only, mindfulness, planning) between-subjects design; thus, 2x4 factorial ANOVAs were conducted on most variables of interest. When appropriate, one-way, between-subjects ANOVAs were conducted for victims and perpetrators separately (i.e., when items were more relevant and/or pertained more to victims of a transgression than perpetrators of a transgression).

We assessed the data for normality using the Shapiro-Wilk test (Razali & Wah, 2011). The Shapiro-Wilk test (p -values ranged from .001 to .51 for the variables of interest) suggested two variables, control beliefs ($p = .01$) and reconciliation attempts ($p = .001$), were not normally distributed. However, examination of the normal probability plot (Q-Q plot) for these two variables did not show extreme departures from normality; points on the plot clustered tightly around the designated line. Previous research indicates that with a large enough sample size (> 30 or 40 participants), departures from normality may not cause significant problems in interpreting the data and that parametric analyses may still be used even if variables are not normally distributed (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2013). Levene's test of homogeneity of variance indicated one variable of interest, avoidance behaviors ($p = .001$), violated this assumption; however, the Welch and Brown-Forsythe tests indicate no significant differences in homogeneity of variance for this variable ($ps > .05$). To correct for any potential violations of this assumption,

we conducted Games-Howell posthoc tests for the avoidance behaviors variable. The Least Significant Difference (LSD) posthoc test was used for all remaining variables.

Hypothesis 1: Granting/Seeking Forgiveness Behaviors

Presence of positive thoughts, feelings, and behaviors. The 2 (transgression role: victim/perpetrator) x 4 (condition: control, message-only, mindfulness, and planning) factorial ANOVA results suggest a significant main effect of transgression role ($F(1, 136) = 75.35, p < .001, \text{partial } \eta^2 = .36$). Participants self-identifying as the perpetrator of a transgression reported significantly more positive thoughts, feelings, and behaviors toward the other person involved in the interpersonal transgression ($M = 7.63, SE, .14$) compared to participants who self-identified as a victim ($M = 5.91, SE, .14, p < .001$). A significant main effect of condition also emerged ($F(3, 136) = 5.09, p = .002, \text{partial } \eta^2 = .10$). Participants in the mindfulness condition ($M = 7.26, SE, .20$) reported significantly more positive thoughts, feeling, and behaviors toward the other person involved in the transgression compared to the control ($M = 6.54, SE, .20, p = .01$) and message-only ($M = 6.27, SE, .20, p = .001$) conditions. Further, participants in the planning condition ($M = 7.01, SE, .19$) reported significantly more positive thoughts, feelings, and behaviors than the control ($p = .05$) and message-only ($p = .008$) conditions. These main effects were qualified by a significant interaction ($F(3, 136) = 4.84, p = .003, \text{partial } \eta^2 = .10$). Victims in the mindfulness ($M = 6.82, SE, .29$) condition reported more positive thoughts, feelings, and behaviors than victims in the control ($M = 5.11, SE, .29, p < .001$) and message-only ($M = 5.31, SE, .28, p = .001$) conditions. Victims in the planning ($M = 6.41, SE, .26$) condition reported more positive thoughts, feelings, and behaviors toward the other person than the control ($p = .001$) and message-only conditions ($p = .01$). Thus, it appears that the main effect of role and condition are being driven by victims in the mindfulness and planning condition. See Figure 4.

Avoidance behaviors. After conducting a 2 (transgression role) x 4 (condition) factorial ANOVA, the results indicate a significant main effect of transgression role ($F(1, 136) = 11.47, p = .001, \text{partial } \eta^2 = .08$), such that victims ($M = 3.47, SE = .12$) reported significantly more desire to avoid the other person involved in the interpersonal transgression compared to perpetrators ($M = 2.52, SE = .12, p = .001$). A marginally significant main effect of condition emerged ($F(3, 136) = 2.37, p = .07, \text{partial } \eta^2 = .05$), such that participants in the mindfulness condition ($M = 2.58, SE = .17$) reported significantly less desire to avoid the other person involved in the interpersonal transgression than the control condition ($M = 3.60, SE = .17, p = .01$). A significant interaction was not found ($F(3, 136) = .90, p = .44, \text{partial } \eta^2 = .02$). See Table 1.

Revenge-seeking behaviors. Past literature indicates that revenge-seeking behaviors may be more relevant for victims of an interpersonal transgression than for perpetrators of an interpersonal transgression (McCullough, 2000). Thus, a one-way, between-subjects ANOVA was conducted in order to discern the desire for victims to enact revenge against the other person involved in the interpersonal transgression. The results suggest a significant difference between the conditions ($F(3, 69) = 5.73, p = .001, \eta^2 = .20$). That is, victims in the mindfulness condition ($M = 1.66, SE = .26$) reported significantly less desire to seek revenge against the other person involved in the interpersonal transgression compared to victims in the control ($M = 2.54, SE = .36, p = .03$) and message-only ($M = 3.04, SE = .29, p = .001$) conditions. Victims in the planning condition ($M = 1.77, SE = .18$) reported significantly less desire to seek revenge against the other person involved in the transgression compared to victims in the control ($p = .05$) and message-only ($p = .001$) conditions.

Reconciliation attempts. Although reconciliation is not a necessary for forgiveness to take place (Enright, 2001), assessing reconciliation attempts (e.g., desire to contact the victim, desire to express concern about the victim's well-being, and desire to explain and/or justify the transgression) is one way to measure asking for forgiveness behaviors (Worthington, 2005). A one-way, between-subjects ANOVA was conducted to assess the extent to which perpetrators would like to reach out to the other person involved in the interpersonal transgression (e.g., attempt to reconcile, make amends, and/or express concern for the other person). No significant differences between the conditions emerged ($F(3, 67) = .43, p = .73, \eta^2 = .02$). There were no significant differences between perpetrators assigned to the mindfulness ($M = 2.28, SE = .25$), planning ($M = 2.32, SE = .22$), message-only ($M = 2.17, SE = .23$), and control ($M = 2.02, SE = .25$) conditions in terms of desire to reconcile.

Hypothesis 2: Attitudes about Granting/Seeking Forgiveness

Benefits of granting/seeking forgiveness. A 2 (transgression role: victim/perpetrator) x 4 (condition: control, message-only, mindfulness, and planning) factorial ANOVA was conducted to assess attitudes about the benefits of granting/seeking forgiveness. A significant main effect of transgression role emerged ($F(1, 136) = 5.81, p = .02, \text{partial } \eta^2 = .04$). Perpetrators ($M = 3.77, SE = .09, p = .02$) reported significantly more benefits of forgiveness compared to victims ($M = 3.45, SE = .09$). A marginally significant main effect occurred for condition ($F(3, 136) = 2.49, p = .06, \text{partial } \eta^2 = .05$), such that participants in the mindfulness condition ($M = 3.85, SE = .13$) reported more benefits of forgiveness than the control ($M = 3.44, SE = .14, p = .03$) and message-only ($M = 3.43, SE = .13, p = .03$) conditions. A significant interaction measuring the effects of transgression role and condition on benefits of

granting/seeking forgiveness was not found ($F(3, 136) = 1.08, p = .36, \text{partial } \eta^2 = .02$) See Table 2.

Costs of granting/seeking forgiveness. Similar to the benefits of granting/seeking forgiveness, results of the 2x4 factorial ANOVA suggest a significant main effect of transgression role ($F(1, 136) = 17.93, p < .001, \text{partial } \eta^2 = .12$) with victims ($M = 2.44, SE = .07$) reporting more costs of forgiveness than perpetrators ($M = 1.99, SE = .07, p < .001$). Furthermore, a main effect of condition emerged ($F(3, 136) = 4.28, p = .006, \text{partial } \eta^2 = .09$). Participants in the mindfulness condition ($M = 1.94, SE = .10$) reported less costs of forgiveness than the control ($M = 2.23, SE = .11, p = .05$), message-only ($M = 2.47, SE = .11, p < .001$), and planning ($M = 2.23, SE = .10, p = .05$) conditions. However, results do not indicate a significant interaction between transgression role, condition, and costs of granting/seeking forgiveness ($F(3, 136) = 1.91, p = .13, \text{partial } \eta^2 = .04$). See Table 3.

Control beliefs. A 2 (transgression role) x 4 (condition) factorial ANOVA was also conducted in relation to control beliefs. Results indicate that a significant main effect of transgression role occurred ($F(1, 136) = 4.68, p = .03, \text{partial } \eta^2 = .03$). Victims ($M = 4.37, SE = .10$) reported more control beliefs compared to perpetrators ($M = 4.07, SE = .10, p = .03$). However, a significant main effect of condition ($F(3, 136) = 1.48, p = .22, \text{partial } \eta^2 = .03$) as well as significant interaction were not found ($F(3, 136) = .38, p = .77, \text{partial } \eta^2 = .01$). See Table 4.

Hypothesis 3: Mood

Positive general mood. The 2 (transgression role) x 4 (condition) factorial ANOVA results indicate a significant main effect of condition ($F(3, 136) = 12.07, p < .001, \text{partial } \eta^2 = .21$). Participants in the mindfulness condition ($M = 1.22, SE = .18$) reported more positive

general mood compared to participants in the control ($M = -.07$, $SE = .18$, $p < .001$), message-only ($M = -.12$, $SE = .18$, $p < .001$), and planning ($M = .52$, $SE = .17$, $p = .006$) conditions.

Participants in the planning condition reported more positive general mood than participants in the control condition ($p = .02$) and message-only ($p = .01$) conditions. A significant main effect of transgression role ($F(1, 136) = .92$, $p = .34$, partial $\eta^2 = .01$) and significant interaction was not found ($F(3, 136) = 1.06$, $p = .37$, partial $\eta^2 = .02$). See Table 5.

Positive mood toward the other person involved in the interpersonal transgression.

Finally, a 2 (transgression role) x 4 (condition) factorial ANOVA was conducted to assess positive mood toward the other person involved in the transgression experience. A main effect was found for transgression role ($F(1, 136) = 5.28$, $p < .001$, partial $\eta^2 = .20$), such that perpetrators ($M = .40$, $SE = .16$) reported a more positive mood toward the other person involved in the interpersonal transgression compared to victims ($M = -.92$, $SE = .16$, $p < .001$). However, results do not show a significant main effect of condition ($F(3, 136) = 1.29$, $p = .28$, partial $\eta^2 = .03$) and interaction ($F(3, 136) = 1.06$, $p = .37$, partial $\eta^2 = .02$). See Table 6.

Study 1: Discussion

Summary of Results

The main purpose of Study 1 was to explore how forgiveness granting behaviors (for victims of a transgression) and forgiveness seeking behaviors (for perpetrators of a transgression) may be promoted among young adults. We focused on a recent, naturalistic, self-reported transgression experience; victims of a recent transgression as well as perpetrators of recent a transgression were recruited for the current study. Both victims and perpetrators reported that the transgression they experienced was severe enough to warrant granting/seeking forgiveness; however, forgiveness granting on behalf of the victim and forgiveness seeking on behalf of the

perpetrator had not yet taken place at the time of the study. Although the transgression had not yet been resolved, participants reported an interest in alleviating the conflict (in terms of granting/seeking forgiveness). This finding highlights an important issue related to the forgiveness granting/seeking process among young adults — that is, engaging in this process can be a difficult and effortful endeavor (Younger et al., 2004). Given this difficulty, young adults may need help performing these behaviors (Riek, 2010).

Drawing from behavior and attitude change models, such as the Theory of Planned Behavior (Ajzen, 1985), exposure to motivation and ability factors may play a role in influencing an individual to engage in effortful behaviors. Limited research has been conducted to explore the influence of motivation and ability on granting/seeking forgiveness among victims and perpetrators, respectively (Riek, 2010). Therefore, we designed the current study to expose young adults currently experiencing a transgression to motives for granting/seeking forgiveness (i.e., a forgiveness message focused on the anticipated outcomes of granting/seeking forgiveness) and techniques (i.e., mindfulness and implementation planning) that may help these individuals to engage in the forgiveness granting/seeking process. We hypothesized that receiving a message expressing reasons why granting/seeking forgiveness could help reduce relational conflict as well as a training technique would influence behaviors related to granting/seeking forgiveness, as well as attitudes about granting/seeking forgiveness, and mood (general/overall mood and mood toward the other person involved in the transgression).

Positive Thoughts, Feelings, and Behaviors

Results of the current study indicate that perpetrators of a transgression had more positive thoughts, feelings, and behaviors (TFB) toward the other person involved in the transgression experience than victims of a transgression. This difference is supported in previous research that

suggests victims of a transgression may exhibit less positive TFB following a transgression than perpetrators (vanOyen-Witvliet, Ludwig, & Bauer, 2002). Further, this finding is consistent when taking into account the measure we used in the current study to assess positive mood toward the other person involved in the transgression. Our results indicate that perpetrators of a transgression reported more positive mood toward the other person than victims.

Although we found that victims reported less positive TFB (and less positive mood toward the other person involved in the transgression experience), our results indicated a significant interaction, such that participants in the mindfulness and planning conditions reported more positive TFB overall compared to participants in the message-only and control conditions. This result was especially pronounced for victims of a transgression. That is, victims in the mindfulness and planning conditions appear to have more positive TFB than victims in the message-only and control conditions. Given the limited research available on mindfulness and planning in relation to the forgiveness process, this finding has implications for future research. Overall, practicing a mindfulness technique and/or a planning technique may help young adults involved in a transgression to feel less negative (more positive) toward the other person involved. Releasing negative TFB and replacing these with more positive TFB is a well-documented sign of the forgiveness process, especially for victims of a transgression (Enright, 1991; Enright, Freedman, & Rique, 1998; Gassin & Enright, 1995; Thompson et al., 2005; Worthington, Berry, & Parrott, 2001). This research suggests that less negative TFB are not only related to the engagement of the forgiveness process, but also related to successfully alleviating the interpersonal conflict.

In addition, we found that general/overall mood was more positive for participants in the mindfulness condition than the planning, message-only, and control conditions. Those in the

planning condition also reported significantly more positive general/overall mood than individuals in the message-only and control conditions; however, participants practicing mindfulness reported the highest general/overall positive mood. This finding suggests that a training technique like mindfulness and/or planning may help participants to immediately feel better following a transgression experience. In the lab participants were instructed to think about a recent transgression as well as answer questions related to this experience. This process of recalling the transgression may naturally cause individuals to feel less positive in terms of general/overall mood (Enright, 1996). Importantly, this process of recalling the transgression (that took place in a lab context during the study) mimics what may happen in everyday life. Individuals may ruminate about a transgression long after the experience has ended (Chiaramello et al., 2008). Rumination is related to general negative affect (Nolen-Hoeksema, Parker, & Larson, 1994), and as a result, repetitive rumination may hinder the forgiveness process (Berry et al., 2001; Feldman et al., 2010; McCullough et al., 2007) for both victims and perpetrators. When thinking about the transgression, particularly at a time when the individual has little to no control over the situation, perhaps practicing mindfulness in order to be present and focused in the moment and/or practicing planning in relation to managing the transgression may serve to promote general/overall mood.

Revenge-Seeking, Avoidance, and Reconciliation

Related to the practice of mindfulness and planning, we found that victims of a transgression who engaged in these training techniques reported less desire to seek-revenge against the other person involved in the transgression compared to victims in the message-only and control conditions. Giving up the desire to seek revenge is documented as a sign of granting forgiveness (McCullough et al., 1997). Previous research suggests that ruminating about a

transgression experience is related to a greater desire for victims of a transgression to seek-revenge against the transgressor, and thereby (potentially) enact some sort of justice following the transgression (McCullough et al., 1997). With this in mind, victims of a transgression may benefit from practicing mindfulness, a technique that allows individuals to redirect or channel negative thoughts and feelings (such as revenge-seeking) into more productive, positive thoughts and feelings. Victims may also benefit from the technique of planning. If a victim of a transgression can make a simple, yet specific “if-then” strategy meant to guide the successful management of the interpersonal conflict, then his or her desire to seek revenge may lessen. Victims who make an “if-then” plan may think about a potential interaction with the transgressor; this plan may encourage less revenge seeking, especially if the plan requires they interact with the transgressor face-to-face to discuss the transgression. Previous research supports the idea that designing a strategy and/or having a plan in place can be important factors that may alleviate conflict (Kochenderfer-Ladd, 2004) and potentially lessen desires to lash-out following a transgression.

Furthermore, results of Study 1 suggest that victims of the current study reported more desire to avoid the other person involved in the transgression experience compared to perpetrators. This finding is supported in previous research that suggests victims of an injustice are initially likely to choose revenge-seeking and/or avoidance (Tripp, Bies, & Aquino, 2007). In terms of the training techniques, we found a marginally significant difference between the mindfulness condition and control, such that participants in the mindfulness condition were less likely to report a desire to avoid the other person compared to the participants in the control condition. Thus, practicing mindfulness may help participants who wish to resolve a conflict in terms of not actively avoiding the other person. An important component or feature of

mindfulness is the opportunity for the individual to acknowledge any thoughts related to the transgression (regardless of if these thoughts or good or bad) in a non-judgmental, non-threatening manner. This might help in the reduction of rumination (similar to the tendency to ruminate mentioned above) as well as reduce anxieties that might be associated with interacting with the other person.

Although perpetrators reported significantly less desire to avoid the other person than victims (consistent with previous research; Tripp et al., 2007), their reported avoidance score (2.52 out of 5) suggested at least some desire, albeit low desire, on behalf of the perpetrator to avoid the other person. Rumination and the tendency to overanalyze how the other person in the transgression experience will react are cited as important reasons perpetrators may not ask for forgiveness (Chiaramello et al., 2008). In fact, this research suggests that anxieties pertaining to how the other person will react are related to avoidance behaviors for perpetrators. Although we did not find a significant interaction in terms of transgression role, condition, and avoidance behaviors, we recommend that the practice of mindfulness may allow for both victims and perpetrators to redirect rumination tendencies and avoidance desires into something more productive.

Relevant to the experience of anxiety perpetrators may feel when ruminating on how a victim may react to their attempt(s) to ask for forgiveness (Chiaramello et al., 2008), we assessed reconciliation attempts among perpetrators of a transgression. Results did not indicate significant differences between the conditions in terms of reconciliation attempts for perpetrators. However, it should be noted that (on average) perpetrators in the current study reported low levels of future reconciliation attempts; the means for each condition were below the mid-point of the scale when assessing the desire to reconcile (highest mean was 2.28 out of 5). In considering previous

research, reconciliation attempts are not a necessary indicator of the forgiveness process (Berecz, 2001; Enright, 1991; Riek & Mania, 2012), and such attempts may be futile if the victim does not want to reconcile and/or if the victim is not ready for such attempts (Riek, 2010). Although victims and perpetrators of the same transgression were not used in the current study, we did find that victims reported more desire to avoid the other person involved in the transgression than perpetrators. The desire to avoid the perpetrator may impact the perpetrators desire and ability to attempt reconciliation (e.g., reach out the victim in order to explain the transgression and/or express concern for the victim's welfare). We also found that victims of the current study reported higher levels of control beliefs, or greater feelings of control in terms of expressing forgiveness, than perpetrators. Avoidance on behalf of the victim paired with lower levels of control beliefs may serve as potential explanations for the low desire perpetrators had to reconcile with the victim of the transgression.

Benefits and Costs of Granting/Seeking Forgiveness

Finally, results show a significant difference between victims and perpetrators in relation to their attitudes toward forgiveness. Perpetrators in the current study reported more benefits and fewer costs of seeking forgiveness than did victims in response to granting forgiveness. Previous research supports this finding for victims. For example, victims of a transgression may hold less favorable attitudes about granting forgiveness due to common misconceptions, such as if forgiveness takes place (and a victim grants forgiveness), then the victim may lose power within the relationship and/or that forgiveness means the victim pardons or disregards the actions of the perpetrator (Enright, 2001; McCullough, 2000). Young adults, namely those that are victims of a transgression, may be more familiar with these misconceptions than the benefits of forgiveness, such as improved mental and physical health (Jeter & Brannon, 2015).

Importantly, when considering the effect of condition on attitudes toward granting/seeking forgiveness, we found that the mindfulness condition was the most influential technique in promoting favorable attitudes toward granting/seeking forgiveness. Participants in the mindfulness condition were not only given an opportunity to learn and practice this technique, but also the message about forgiveness (which included information on the benefits of granting/seeking forgiveness). Our results suggest that in order to promote more favorable attitudes in relation to the forgiveness process, perhaps young adults need more than a message about these benefits (i.e., more than motivation) — they may also need a technique that can help them to engage in this process.

Limitations and Future Directions

Overall, the results of Study 1 partially support our initial hypotheses. We did find that granting/seeking forgiveness behaviors, attitudes about granting/seeking forgiveness, and mood were impacted by the training conditions; however, we consistently found that these variables were impacted by receiving both a message and a training technique (i.e., mindfulness condition and/or planning condition). Generally speaking, participants in the mindfulness condition seemed to benefit most in the current study. For instance, participants who received the mindfulness training reported more positive overall/general mood, more positive thoughts, feelings, and behaviors toward the other person involved in the transgression, less avoidance behaviors, and more favorable attitudes toward granting/seeking forgiveness. Further, victims of a transgression reported less desire to seek revenge following the mindfulness training.

These findings have implications for future research and practice; however, it is important to recognize limitations of the current study. First, the sample used in the current study represents a typical college sample lacking in diversity (e.g., mostly Caucasian, first year college

students). This lack of diversity may limit the generalizability of our findings to other young adult populations. Future research would benefit from sampling a more diverse population of young adults. Second, we utilized a self-report, cross-sectional design in order to measure variables of interest. Although this design is similar to a number of studies investigating ways to promote the forgiveness process, we were unable to assess the direct effectiveness of the training techniques in terms of eliciting behavioral change. Attitude and behavioral change models (i.e., the Theory of Planned Behavior) indicate that forming a behavioral intention is a key component in expressing an effortful behavior (Ajzen, 1985). Thus, it may be reasonable to assume that the training conditions helped young adults struggling with a recent interpersonal transgression to develop a behavioral intent to grant/seek forgiveness. This assumption is supported when considering that participants reported an interest in resolving the interpersonal conflict. Also, participants in the mindfulness condition reported more positive thoughts, feelings, and behaviors toward the other person involved in the transgression, more favorable attitudes about the forgiveness process, and greater desire (or potentially greater intent) to engage in behaviors thought to be related to forgiveness (e.g., less avoidance overall, and less revenge seeking on behalf of victims). It is impressive that we found significant results given the short training sessions as well as the limited prior exposure that participants had with both the mindfulness and planning techniques before participating in this study. To further strengthen the effectiveness of these techniques, future research might benefit from more training sessions. For example, researchers might conduct an initial training session (similar to the current study) as well as several reinforcement training sessions before assessing granting/seeking forgiveness. Also, future research might benefit from examining a range of transgression experiences, characteristics associated with various transgressions (e.g., severity and how long ago the

transgression occurred), as well as recruiting victims and perpetrators from the same transgression experience in order to assess the effectiveness of the training techniques for the same transgression.

Finally, when comparing the effect sizes found in the current study to Cohen's (1992) convention, we found small effects for most variables of interest (partial η^2 ranged from .03-.36). These small effects may be related to the short amount of time participants were given to practice a training technique before completing measures to assess their mood, attitudes, and behaviors. Limited studies examining the link between granting/seeking forgiveness and training techniques like mindfulness and planning. Thus, we propose that results of the current study add unique knowledge to existing literature; however, based on the small effect sizes, we acknowledge that providing a training technique is simply one factor that may help young adults to engage in the forgiveness process. Continued research in this area may provide useful information in regards to additional factors that may assist and/or guide young adults who are confronted with interpersonal conflict.

Despite these limitations, the findings of Study 1 have applied and practical implications. Our findings demonstrate several benefits of teaching young adults to practice and apply mindfulness, such as better mood, more favorable attitudes toward granting/seeking forgiveness, and greater desire to engage in behaviors that may facilitate the forgiveness process. Limited research has been conducted on the effectiveness of mindfulness training in relation to granting/seeking forgiveness. To date, two studies have been conducted to examine the connection between mindfulness and forgiveness (Oman et al., 2008; Shapiro et al., 2008); however, these studies found conflicting results and did not take into account the perpetrators perspective. The current study contributes new knowledge to existing forgiveness literature by

exploring mindfulness and the benefits this training might produce if applied to interpersonal transgressions. Continued research exploring this technique (among others) may serve to better inform young adults of reasons/motives to grant/seek forgiveness as well as useful, easy to implement strategies that can help them engage in the effortful process of forgiveness.

Chapter 3 - Study 2

Overview

In Study 2, we attempted to further test the effectiveness of the training conditions on forgiveness granting/seeking behaviors, attitudes about forgiveness, and mood following a standardized transgression experience. Using a standardized transgression experience allowed us to control for certain contextual and relational factors potentially present in Study 1, such as how long ago the transgression occurred, the type of transgression, severity of the transgression, and relationship closeness (Exline et al., 2004). This standardized transgression also allowed for an actual/behavioral measure of forgiveness granting and forgiveness seeking within a laboratory context.

The same training conditions (message-only condition; mindfulness/message condition; planning/message condition; control condition) were examined. Similar to Study 1, attitudes about forgiveness and mood served as outcome variables for Study 2. In addition to these variables, self-reported forgiveness granting/seeking behaviors and a behavioral measure of granting/seeking forgiveness were obtained through the completion of a distribution of resources task (Carlisle et al., 2012). This task not only allowed us to create a transgression experience (for both victims of a transgression and perpetrators of a transgression) within a laboratory context, but also allowed participants an opportunity to engage (unknowingly) in forgiveness granting/seeking-related behaviors while completing the task.

Hypotheses and Research Questions

Hypothesis 1: Participants in the message-only, mindfulness/message, and planning/message conditions will report more favorable attitudes about granting/seeking forgiveness compared to the control group.

Research Question: Is one condition (message only; mindfulness/message; planning/message) more effective than the others at promoting attitudes about granting/seeking forgiveness?

Hypothesis 2: The forgiveness message condition, mindfulness/message condition, and planning/message condition will be more influential than the control condition in promoting a more positive general mood and more positive mood toward the other person involved in the transgression experience (partner of the distribution task).

Research Question: Is one training condition (message-only; mindfulness/message; planning/message) more effective than the others at influencing general mood and mood toward the other person?

Hypothesis 3: The forgiveness message condition, mindfulness/message condition, and planning/message condition will be more influential than the control condition in promoting self-reported forgiveness granting/forgiveness seeking behaviors within the context of the distribution of resources task.

Research Question: Is one training condition (message only; mindfulness/message; planning/message) more effective than the others at influencing self-reports of granting/seeking forgiveness?

Hypothesis 4: The forgiveness message condition, mindfulness/message condition, and planning/message condition will be more influential than the control condition in promoting actual forgiveness granting/seeking behaviors within the context of the distribution of resources task.

Research Question: Is one training condition (message-only; mindfulness/message; planning/message) more influential than the others at influencing behavioral granting/seeking forgiveness?

Study 2: Method

Participants

Undergraduate students enrolled in Introductory Psychology classes were recruited for Study 2 using SONA (university sign-up system). It is important to note that participants who completed Study 1 were excluded from Study 2. Drawing from previous research utilizing the distribution of resources task (Carlisle et al., 2012), we recruited 155 undergraduate students (approximately 20 victims and 20 perpetrators randomly assigned to each research condition). Study 2 was advertised on SONA as a general study on emotion regulation (Appendix L). Participants were told that the researchers conducting this study were interested in learning more about how young adults regulate their emotions.

Using the same data cleaning procedures as Study 1 (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2013), we removed five participants from subsequent data analyses via listwise deletion. On average, these five participants only completed 35 items of the survey (~15% of the overall study variables). Standardized scores were created for each variable of interest. We compared these scores to the convention of +/- 3.29 (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2013). Three scores exceeded this convention, and were therefore not used in the analyses that follow (Cohen et al., 2003). The final data set included 147 participants (67% female) with an average age of 19.2 years ($SE = .21$). A majority of the participants (73%) self-identified as Caucasian (followed by 11% Hispanic/Latino/a; 6% African-American; 6% Asian; 4% Bi-racial) and first year college classification (66%).

Materials and Measures

Cover story. The researcher reminded participants that the purpose of the study was to learn more about how young adults regulate their emotions. To assess emotion regulation, the participants were told that they would engage in a task during the study as well as practice an emotion regulation technique (if in the message/technique conditions). We stressed that it was important for participants to respond honestly about their experiences while completing the task and all survey measures and that there were no right or wrong answers/behaviors when engaging in this study.

Emotion regulation message. Participants in the message-only and message/technique conditions received the same message used in Study 1; however, this message was updated to reflect the cover story of Study 2. As opposed to addressing the consequences of not granting/seeking forgiveness (as was the case with the message used in Study 1), the message used in Study 2 addressed the consequences of not properly regulating emotions. This message informed participants of the consequences of not regulating emotions when someone frustrates/upsets them as well as when they frustrate/upset someone else (Appendix M).

Distribution of resources task. The distribution of resources task was used as a means to elicit an interpersonal transgression within a laboratory context. This task has been used in previous research (Carlisle et al., 2012) to simulate a transgression in which participants are victims of a slight interpersonal offense; however, no study to our knowledge has used this task to simulate a transgression in which the participants act as perpetrators of a slight interpersonal offense. Participants in the current study were given an informational sheet with task instructions (Appendix N).

Participants were instructed that they would interact with one person in the experiment group to complete a distribution of resources task. However, their partner for the task (one person from the study session group) would be anonymous; partnerships for the task were randomly pre-determined by the researcher before the study began. The task included distributing resources (i.e., raffle-tickets) with the assigned partner in a series of three resource distribution rounds. During each round, ten raffle tickets were distributed; these raffle tickets were good for a drawing for a \$100 gift-card. Participants were instructed that for each distribution round, the tickets would be distributed either by chance, by the other participant (other person in the partnership), or by him/herself. Prior to each distribution, the researcher notified the participants about who the distribution agent was for each round. The distribution agent for each round was randomly assigned and there were no guarantees that each participant would have an opportunity to distribute the raffle tickets (e.g., chance could have been the distribution agent for all three rounds).

A researcher informed participants that the task was designed to potentially cause him or her to feel frustrated/upset with his or her partner as well as potentially feel that he or she might make his or her partner feel frustrated/upset. These feelings, however, would vary for each participant given the random assignment of the distribution agent as well as when/how the distribution agent decided to distribute the tickets. If a participant had an opportunity to distribute the tickets, it was completely up to him/her how many tickets he/she gave to his/her partner. There were only two rules for distributing the tickets: 1) the distributor could not give away all of the tickets, and 2) the distributor could not keep all of the tickets. Participants were also told that they could communicate with their partner (via a pen/pencil note distributed covertly by the researcher to the partner in a closed envelope) in between distribution rounds.

However, in actuality, the participants in this study were not working with another person to complete the distribution of resources task. All communication and distribution decisions were pre-determined/pre-written by a researcher in order to elicit a situation in which participants were either a victim or perpetrator (not both) of an interpersonal transgression. In order to create a situation in which a participant was either a victim or perpetrator of a slight interpersonal transgression, we arranged all materials before the study began so that each round adhered to the following order.

Round one. The distribution agent for the first round of the task (for both victims and perpetrators of an interpersonal offense) was chance. That is, all participants randomly received 2 out of 10 tickets.

Round two (victim perspective). For participants randomly assigned to the victim condition, they were told that the distribution agent in the second round was their partner (the other person); however, we arranged the materials ahead of time so that every participant in the victim condition received 1 out of 10 tickets from his/her partner. In this way, the second round constituted an interpersonal transgression experience; participants in the victim condition were part of a standardized transgression on behalf of their “partner.”

Round two (perpetrator perspective). For participants in the perpetrator condition, the actual participant was the distribution agent during Round 2. When previously conducting this resource task with Introductory Psychology students at Kansas State University, a majority of the participants indicated that their strategy or reasoning for distributing the raffle tickets was to “keep things even/fair.” Therefore, we anticipated that participants assigned to the perpetrator condition would give away a small number of tickets (5 or fewer) to their partner in order to “even things up” based on getting only 1 out of 10 tickets by chance in the first distribution

round. This round served as the standardized transgression experience for participants in the perpetrator condition. Following the Round 2 distribution, the actual participant received a note from their partner in a closed envelope that said, “That hurts! I really needed to win that gift-card. Just because I got a lot of tickets by chance isn’t my fault. I wouldn’t have done that to you.” This note was pre-written by the researcher and alerted the actual participant that their partner was upset or frustrated by their distribution decision in round two.

Round three (victim perspective). Participants in the victim condition had the opportunity to distribute the tickets in Round 3. This third round served as a behavioral measure of granting forgiveness (i.e., the number of tickets given to the partner/other person constituted our behavioral measure of forgiveness granting; Carlisle et al., 2012).

Round three (perpetrator perspective). Participants in the perpetrator condition did not participate in a Round 3 of the distribution of resources task (see procedure section for more details); however, they were given an opportunity to write a paper/pencil note to their partner. We anticipated that the note and information written in the note would serve as a behavioral measure of seeking forgiveness; however, this behavioral manipulation for perpetrators was not as strong as the behavioral manipulation for victims. More information about the note and a behavioral measure of seeking forgiveness can be found in the discussion/summary section of Study 2.

Manipulation check items. After being notified who the distribution agent was for each round, all participants completed a manipulation check question. This question asked participants to indicate who the distributor was for the specified round to ensure that they understood the task and who the distribution agent was for each round. Participants also completed manipulation check questions after the task that pertain to how many tickets they received after each round.

Together, these questions assessed participants' overall understanding of the task as well as what happened during each distribution round. All participants (100%) answered the manipulation check questions about the distribution agent and the number of tickets received correctly.

Training conditions. Participants were randomly assigned to one of four conditions (i.e., mindfulness, planning, message-only, or control).

Mindfulness. Participants who were randomly assigned to the mindfulness training condition received a hard copy of a detailed description and instructions for engaging in this technique. The instructions for this technique were provided after each distribution round and read out loud by the researcher. After the first round of the distribution task, participants were asked to practice mindfulness as it relates to a situation in which they have had difficulty regulating their emotions (Appendix O). After the second round of the distribution task, participants were asked to practice mindfulness as it related to a face-to-face interaction they would have with their partner during the third round (Appendix O).

Implementation planning. Similar to the mindfulness training condition, participants in the implementation planning condition received a hard copy of a detailed description and instructions for engaging in this technique. The instructions were given to participants after each round and the researcher read these instructions out loud to the group. After the first round of the distribution task, participants were asked to practice implementation planning as it related to a situation in which they had difficulty regulating their emotions (Appendix P). After the second round of the distribution task, participants were asked to practice implementation planning as it related to a face-to-face interaction they would have with their partner during the third round (Appendix P).

Message-only and control conditions. Participants in the message-only and control conditions were also given instructions for what to do after each distribution round. After the first round, participants thought about a situation in which they had difficulty regulating their emotions (Appendix Q). The participants were then instructed to sit quietly for five minutes. After the second round of the distribution task, participants were asked to think about a face-to-face interaction they would experience with their partner during the third round (Appendix Q). Again, the participants were instructed to sit quietly. The length of time participants sat quietly after each round mimicked the amount of time needed to complete the mindfulness or implementation planning training (~five minutes to complete the trainings).

Dependent measures

Attitudes about granting/seeking forgiveness. Items used in Study 1 to assess attitudes toward granting/seeking forgiveness (motivations) were also used in Study 2. Participants in Study 2 were instructed to complete the items based on their general outlook on forgiving someone who hurt them as well as asking for forgiveness from someone they hurt (Appendix R). A composite score was created to assess the benefits of granting/seeking forgiveness ($\alpha = .82$) as well as the costs of granting/seeking forgiveness ($\alpha = .75$). Participants also completed the four items used in Study 1 to assess control beliefs ($\alpha = .91$).

Mood. Participants in Study 2 also completed the same general mood measure and mood toward the other person involved in the distribution of resources task (i.e., the participant's partner) that were utilized in Study 1 (Appendix S). Similar to Study 1, an index score was calculated for overall positive mood by taking the difference between positive mood ($\alpha = .77$) and negative mood ($\alpha = .80$). An index score also was developed for positive mood toward the

partner by taking the difference between positive mood toward the partner ($\alpha = .78$) and negative mood toward the partner ($\alpha = .83$).

Forgiveness granting/seeking behaviors. For victims of a standardized transgression, we measured their reason(s) for their distribution decision during the task. We reminded participants that the distribution agent for each round was different for each partnership, so they should answer the questions based on what personally happened to them during the task (i.e., when/if they got to be the distributor). Some of the reasons why a participant may have distributed the tickets a certain way included: “I distributed the tickets the way I did in order to express forgiveness; to get as many tickets as possible to win the gift-card; to get payback for an earlier distribution; to act morally; to make things even; to be fair to my partner” (Appendix T).

We asked perpetrators questions related to how they would respond to their partner in the face-to-face interaction that would occur during round three. Example items included: “I would apologize to my partner;” “I would explain my distribution decision to my partner;” “I would take responsibility for my distribution decision;” and “I would try to make amends with my partner” (Appendix T). Participants were again instructed to complete these measures as they relate to what happened to them personally during the distribution rounds.

Behavioral measure of granting/seeking forgiveness. For victims of the standardized transgression, the number of tickets distributed in round three served as a behavioral measure of granting forgiveness. We also measured self-reported reasons for the participant’s distribution decision (e.g., I distributed the tickets in round three the way I did, because I wanted to express forgiveness).

For perpetrators of the standardized transgression, we provided an opportunity for them to explain their distribution decision to their partner through a paper and pencil note. We

considered an act of writing a note as a potential form of seeking forgiveness. We also took into account the measure above asking participants to indicate how they would interact with their partner during the face-to-face interaction.

Procedure

After obtaining research approval from the University's Institutional Review Board, we recruited participants using SONA (university sign-up system).

Assignment to conditions. Similar to the procedure used in Study 1, participants completed the current study in small groups (groups ranged from two to six students per session). Participants were spaced out evenly at their own desk around the lab room to ensure privacy.

Participants were randomly assigned to one of the four training conditions (mindfulness/message; planning/message; message-only; control). All participants were exposed to the same condition within the experimental session. Study materials were arranged in folders before each study session by the primary researcher. The study sessions took place at various times throughout the week (Monday-Friday). Figures 2 and 3 represent the procedural order for each condition.

Opening instructions. Participants received an informed consent at the beginning of the study session. They were informed that the purpose of the study was to investigate emotion regulation. The informed consent clearly outlined any risks and benefits of participating in the research session and that participation was voluntary and confidential. Participants then complete questions related to demographic information (same as Study 1; Appendix K). Next, a researcher told participants the cover story and fully explained the distribution of resources task (Appendix N). Once the researcher explained the task, participants had the opportunity to ask any questions regarding the purpose of the study and/or questions about completing the task.

Emotion regulation message. Participants in the message-only condition and the technique/message conditions were given a similar message (Appendix M) as the message used in Study 1. However, in order to maintain the cover story for Study 2, the message was framed around the consequences of a participant not properly regulating his or her emotions. An additional difference between the emotion regulation message for Study 2 and the forgiveness message used in Study 1 was the intended target of the message. That is, we provided one general message to all participants in Study 2 that clearly outlined the importance of emotion regulation after someone does something that frustrates/upsets him or her as well as when the participant does something to frustrate/upset someone else. Using one general message allowed us to uphold the cover story for Study 2 (i.e., the task the participants engaged in would potentially make him or her feel upset/frustrated by the other person as well as potentially make the other person feel frustrated/upset).

Distribution of resources task. After being presented with the emotion regulation message, participants were instructed that it was now time to complete the distribution of resources task. For participants in the technique/message conditions, the researcher reminded these participants that the task might make them feel frustrated/upset with their assigned partner as well as they might make their assigned partner feel frustrated or upset. Therefore, they engaged in a training technique to help them to regulate their emotions following each distribution round. Participants received a description about the training technique (same description used in Study 1) and information on how to engage in the assigned technique after each round for five minutes. Participants in the message-only and control conditions were instructed to sit quietly for five minutes following each distribution round.

Round one. All participants received an envelope with a slip of paper informing them that the distribution agent for the first round was chance. Participants were asked to complete a manipulation check question (“who is the distribution agent for round 1 of the task”) printed at the bottom of the slip of paper. They returned the slip of paper to the envelope and handed it back to the researcher after answering the manipulation check question. Once all envelopes were handed back to the researcher and an appropriate amount of time has passed (one-two minutes), the participants received another envelope with the amount of tickets they were given during the first round (i.e., “you received 2 out of 10 tickets by chance during Round 1”). They were then instructed to spend five minutes practicing the assigned technique (if in the technique/message conditions) or sit quietly for five minutes (if in the message-only and control conditions) while the researcher prepared for Round 2. Similar to Study 1, we asked participants in the message-only and control conditions to sit quietly in order to reduce potential demand characteristics (resulting in inflated negative affect because of instructing participants to keep thinking intensely about the transgression) as well as potential distraction characteristics (that would not allow the participant to simultaneously think at all about the transgression).

Round two. Participants in the victim condition were informed that their partner was the distribution agent for round two; they received an envelope with a slip of paper, completed the manipulation check question for Round 2, and returned the envelope to the researcher. After one-two minutes (to simulate a distribution decision was being made), they were given another envelope with 1 out of 10 tickets from their partner. They then practiced the assigned technique. During this round, we informed participants in the message/technique conditions that they would have an opportunity to interact face-to-face with their partner for the third and final round; thus, they should practice the technique based on the upcoming interaction with their partner. We also

told participants in the message-only and control conditions about this face-to-face interaction with their partner for round three, however, these participants were instructed to sit quietly while the researcher prepared for the final round.

The second distribution round for participants in the perpetrator condition proceeded similarly, however, the distribution agent was the actual participant. The participants received an envelope letting them know that they were the distribution agent and that they should write down for the researcher (on a slip of paper provided) their distribution decision (e.g., “I want to give 3 out of the 10 tickets to my partner”). They handed the envelope back to the researcher. The researcher then gave them back an envelope letting them know that their partner received the assigned amount of tickets. This process mimicked the process of round 1 so as not to create suspicion among participants about the distribution round. After the distribution decision was made and the envelopes were handed out, the participant received a pre-written note from his or her partner expressing frustration about the participant’s distribution decision during round 2 (this note was given covertly to participants). The researcher then told participants about the face-to-face interaction (described above) and to practice the assigned technique (message/technique conditions) or sit quietly for five minutes (message-only; control conditions).

Round three. Participants in the victim condition were informed that there was not enough time for the third (and final round) to take place as a face-to-face interaction. As such, the last round would take place in the original format. The participant had the opportunity to distribute the raffle-tickets in Round 3. Immediately following the distribution decision, participants completed a survey packet that included items assessing attitudes about granting/seeking forgiveness (Appendix R), general mood and mood toward the participant’s

partner (Appendix S), the self-reported reasons for forgiveness granting/seeking, and self-reported behaviors associated with interacting with the other person (Appendix T).

Participants in the perpetrator condition also were informed that there was not enough time for a face-to-face interaction, as well as not enough time for a third distribution round. However, participants were given an opportunity to write a note to their partner as opposed to meet with him/her face-to-face. During this time the researcher announced that writing a note was not required; it was completely up to the participant if he or she would like to write a note to his or her partner. Next, participants completed the survey packet with questions pertaining to their attitudes about granting/seeking forgiveness (Appendix R), general mood and mood toward the partner (Appendix S), the self-reported reasons for granting/seeking forgiveness, and self-reported behaviors associated with interacting with the other person (Appendix T).

Closing information. Participants were asked to respond to an open-ended manipulation check question that measured their level of suspicion about the task. Consistent with previous research using the distribution of recourses task (Carlisle et al., 2012), participants did not give any evidence of suspicion that they were not working with another person.

At the end of the study, all participants were given a debriefing form (Appendix U) that clearly outlined that the actual purpose of the study was to investigate the effectiveness of certain training techniques in promoting forgiveness granting/seeking behaviors. The contact information for the primary researcher as well as the IRB Chair was also listed. At this time the participants were made aware of the deception used in the study and any distress that occurred as a result of this deception was handled by the researcher; it should be noted that no participants reported being distressed/upset after completing this study. Finally, participants were notified that they were still in the running for the \$100 gift-card.

Study 2: Results

Data Analytic Strategy

Similar to the first Study, study 2 primarily consisted of a 2 (transgression role: victim/perpetrator) x 4 (condition: control, message-only, mindfulness, planning) between-subjects design; 2x4 factorial ANOVAs were conducted on most variables of interest. When appropriate, one-way between-subjects ANOVAs as well as mixed-factors ANOVAs were conducted for victims and perpetrators separately (i.e., when items were more relevant and/or pertained more to victims of a transgression than perpetrators of a transgression).

We assessed the data for normality using the Shapiro-Wilk test (Razali & Wah, 2011). The Shapiro-Wilk test (p -values ranged from .18 to .99 for the variables of interest) suggested no departures from normality. Levene's test of homogeneity of variance indicated one variable of interest, the amount of tickets given by victims in round three of the task ($p = .003$), violated this assumption; however, the Welch ($p < .008$) and Brown-Forsythe tests were also significant ($p = .008$). To correct for violations of this assumption, Games-Howell posthoc tests were conducted for the amount of tickets given. The Least Significant Difference (LSD) posthoc test was used for all remaining variables.

Mauchly's test indicated that the assumption of sphericity was violated when testing the victim's reasons for his/her distribution decision [$\chi^2(35) = 260.85, p < .001$] and the perpetrator's response to the potential interaction with his/her partner [$\chi^2(14) = 150.61, p < .001$], suggesting that variance calculations may not be accurate and may result in an inflated F-ratio. Therefore, we corrected degrees of freedom using Greenhouse-Geisser estimates (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2013) to obtain a more valid F-ratio.

Hypothesis 1: Attitudes about Granting/Seeking Forgiveness

Benefits of granting/seeking forgiveness. Results of the 2 (transgression role: victim/perpetrator) x 4 (condition: control, message-only, mindfulness, and planning) factorial ANOVA indicate a significant main effect of transgression role ($F(1, 139) = .05, p = .83, \text{partial } \eta^2 = .01$) and condition ($F(3, 139) = 1.40, p = .25, \text{partial } \eta^2 = .03$) did not emerge. However, the results do suggest a significant interaction ($F(3, 139) = 2.94, p = .04, \text{partial } \eta^2 = .07$). Victims in the mindfulness ($M = 4.36, SE = .16, p = .003$), planning ($M = 4.33, SE = .16, p = .003$), and message-only ($M = 4.16, SE = .17, p = .003$) conditions reported more benefits of forgiveness compared to victims in the control condition ($M = 3.67, SE = .16$). See Figure 5.

Costs of granting/seeking forgiveness. The results of the 2 (transgression role) x 4 (condition) factorial ANOVA were non-significant. That is, a significant main effect of transgression role ($F(1, 139) = .001, p = .97, \text{partial } \eta^2 < .001$), main effect of condition ($F(3, 139) = 1.90, p = .13, \text{partial } \eta^2 = .05$), and interaction ($F(3, 139) = .30, p = .83, \text{partial } \eta^2 = .01$) were not found.

Control beliefs. Similar to the costs of granting/seeking forgiveness, the results of the 2x4 factorial ANOVA were non-significant. We did not find a significant main effect of transgression role ($F(1, 139) = .36, p = .55, \text{partial } \eta^2 = .003$), condition ($F(3, 139) = .96, p = .41, \text{partial } \eta^2 = .02$), and interaction ($F(3, 139) = 1.41, p = .24, \text{partial } \eta^2 = .03$).

Hypothesis 2: Mood

Positive mood following the transgression. A 2 (transgression role) x 4 (condition) was performed to assess positive mood following the transgression as well as positive mood toward the participant's partner. A significant main effect of condition emerged ($F(3, 139) = 3.20, p = .03, \text{partial } \eta^2 = .01$). Participants in the mindfulness ($M = 1.00, SE = .16$) and planning ($M = .82,$

$SE = .17$) conditions reported more positive general mood following the transgression than participants in the control condition ($M = .33, SE = .16, p = .004, .04$). A significant main effect of transgression role ($F(1, 139) = .04, p = .84, \text{partial } \eta^2 < .001$) and significant interaction ($F(3, 139) = .20, p = .90, \text{partial } \eta^2 = .01$) were not found. See Table 7.

Positive mood toward partner. The 2x4 factorial ANOVA results indicate a significant main effect of transgression role ($F(1, 139) = 26.61, p < .001, \text{partial } \eta^2 = .18$). Victims ($M = -.61, SE = .13$) reported less positive mood toward their partner following the transgression than perpetrators ($M = .37, SE = .14, p < .001$). Results do not indicate a significant main effect of condition ($F(3, 139) = 1.26, p = .29, \text{partial } \eta^2 = .03$) as well as non-significant interaction ($F(3, 139) = 1.09, p = .36, \text{partial } \eta^2 = .03$). See Table 8.

Hypothesis 3: Behavioral Granting/Seeking Forgiveness

Amount of tickets provided by victim. A one-way, between-subjects ANOVA was conducted to assess the effect of condition on the amount of tickets given by the participants during the distribution of resources task (i.e., our behavioral measure of forgiveness; Carlisle et al., 2012). Results indicate a significant difference between the conditions and the number of tickets given ($F(3, 71) = 4.58, p = .01, \eta^2 = .18$). More specifically, participants in the control condition ($M = 1.41, SE = .19$) gave fewer tickets to their partner during round three compared to participants in the mindfulness ($M = 4.76, SE = .39, p = .02$), planning ($M = 3.33, SE = .40, p = .003$), and message-only ($M = 3.11, SE = .58, p = .002$) conditions.

Note written by perpetrator. At the end of the distribution of resources task, perpetrators were given the opportunity to write an optional note to their partner following the transgression (i.e., after making their distribution decision and receiving a note from their partner expressing dissatisfaction with the distribution). This note was not required, and although some

participants did write a note to their partner, the information provided in the notes was not consistently detailed enough to code and perform a content analysis. Furthermore, it was unclear if participants who did not write a note did so because they were not interested in interacting with their partner (e.g., apologizing for their distribution decision) and/or if these participants did not understand the instructions provided about the optional note. More information and potential explanation for the limited detail provided in the notes can be found in the discussion section.

Hypothesis 4: Self-Reported Granting/Seeking Forgiveness

Victim's reasons for distribution decision. A mixed-factors ANOVA was conducted to discern significant differences between the conditions (between-subjects factor) and self-reported reasons for a victim's distribution decision during round three (within-subjects factor). The results suggest a significant main effect of reasons ($F(3.21, 221.19) = 7.15, p < .001$, partial $\eta^2 = .18$). This main effect was qualified by a significant interaction ($F(9.62, 221.19) = 1.88, p = .02$, partial $\eta^2 = .08$). Participants in the mindfulness condition reported that their distribution decision during Round three was based on wanting to be more fair to their partner ($M = 5.44, SE = .46$) than participants in the control condition ($M = 3.71, SE = .45, p = .01$). Participants in the mindfulness condition also reported wanting to help their partner ($M = 4.88, SE = .44$) more than participants in the control condition ($M = 3.24, SE = .43, p = .01$) as well as wanting less payback for an earlier distribution round ($M = 3.00, SE = .58$) compared to the control condition ($M = 4.59, SE = .56, p = .05$). Further, participants in the mindfulness condition reported that they wanted to act more morally when distributing the tickets ($M = 5.19, SE = .43$) than participants in the control condition ($M = 3.59, SE = .42, p = .01$) as well as wanted to express more forgiveness in regards to their partner giving them a small amount of tickets in an earlier round ($M = 4.50, SE = .49$) than the control condition ($M = 2.18, SE = .47, p = .001$). Finally,

participants in the planning condition ($M = 4.77, SE = .41$) reported wanting to act more morally in their distribution decision than participants in the control condition ($p = .05$). See Figure 6.

Perpetrator's response to potential interaction with partner. A mixed-factors ANOVA also was conducted to assess significant differences between the conditions (between-subjects factor) and the perpetrators' self-reported responses to the potential face-to-face interaction with their partner (within-subjects factor). Results indicate a significant main effect of responses to the potential interaction ($F(2.49, 169.48) = 34.59, p < .001, \text{partial } \eta^2 = .38$). During the potential interaction with their partner, participants reported that they would be more likely to take responsibility for the distribution decision that upset their partner ($M = 6.23, SE = .12$) as well as explain their distribution decision ($M = 5.98, SE = .16$) than apologize to their partner ($M = 3.67, SE = .27, p < .001$), make amends with their partner ($M = 4.88, SE = .23, p < .001$), express concern if they upset their partner ($M = 5.04, SE = .21, p < .001$), and justify their distribution decision ($M = 5.91, SE = .15, p < .03$). Furthermore, participants reported being less likely to apologize to their partner than try to make amends, express concern about their partner, justify their decision, explain their decision, and take responsibility for their decision ($ps < .001$). A significant interaction ($F(7.48, 169.48) = 1.69, p = .11, \text{partial } \eta^2 = .08$) did not emerge. See Table 9.

Study 2: Discussion

Summary of Results

The main purpose of Study 2 was to explore the effectiveness of the same forgiveness message (motives) and training techniques (ability) used in Study 1 within the context of a standardized transgression experience. We utilized a distribution of resources task (Carlisle et al., 2012) in order to create a standardized transgression. This design allowed for control over

contextual factors, such as the type of transgression, the severity of the transgression, and relationship closeness that may impact the forgiveness process. In addition, this task mimicked slight transgression experiences that may occur on an everyday basis between acquaintances and/or strangers. We informed participants that they would complete items and a task relevant to emotion regulation. This cover story and task provided an opportunity for participants to engage in forgiveness granting/seeking-related behaviors without their knowledge. Therefore, we were able to collect self-report measures as well as a behavioral measure of actual granting/seeking forgiveness. Similar to Study 1, results indicate partial support for some of our research hypotheses. Overall, we found that the message-only and training conditions were effective in promoting favorable attitudes toward granting/seeking forgiveness. We also found that our training conditions influenced participants' mood as well as some self-report and behavioral measures of forgiveness, namely for victims of the standardized transgression.

Attitudes toward Granting/Seeking Forgiveness

When assessing the benefits of granting/seeking forgiveness, we found a significant interaction for victims. More specifically, victims in the mindfulness, planning, and message-only conditions reported more benefits of granting forgiveness than the control condition. This finding suggests that attitudes about forgiveness may be influenced for the better if young adults, particularly victims of a slight transgression, are exposed to both reasons (motives) and techniques (ability) related to the forgiveness process. According to the Theory of Planned Behavior (Ajzen, 1985), favorable attitudes about the anticipated outcomes of a behavior may influence the individual to engage in that specified behavior. Furthermore, the combination of participants' favorable attitudes about the anticipated outcomes of a behavior as well as their

ability to perform the behavior serve to further increase the likelihood that the behavior will occur.

Interestingly, we did not find significant differences between victims/perpetrators and the conditions when assessing control beliefs. Although not significant, participants (in general) seemed confident in their ability to grant/seek forgiveness following the slight transgression (means ranged from 3.72 to 4.21 out of 5). However, the behavioral measures used in the current study suggest some differences in terms of actual expressions of forgiveness granting/seeking. These findings highlight an important issue relevant to forgiveness research. That is, individuals may feel confident that they could easily grant/seek forgiveness following a slight transgression; however, when put in a slight transgression situation, granting and seeking forgiveness may be more difficult than the individual originally intended.

Mood

When assessing mood, we found that victims in the current study reported a less positive mood toward their partner than perpetrators. This finding is similar to the results of Study 1 and supported by previous research suggesting victims generally possess less positive emotions/mood toward the person who slights, wrongs, and/or mistreats them (Enright, 1991; vanOyen-Witvliet et al., 2002). In addition, it is important to consider the type of transgression used in the current study and how this experience may have impacted the mood of perpetrators. We created a situation in which participants assigned to be perpetrators committed a transgression without their knowledge. As such, the slight transgression on behalf of the perpetrator was unintentional. This unintentionality may further explain why perpetrators in the current study reported more positive mood toward their partner compared to victims.

We also found that positive general/overall mood following the slight transgression was influenced by the training conditions. Participants in the mindfulness and planning conditions reported more positive general/overall mood than participants in the control condition. This result highlights an important implication for future research. Specifically, this finding suggests that exposure to both a message (motivation) and a training technique (ability) is essential when trying to promote overall/general mood. Participants not only need reasons to feel better, but also techniques they can easily implement in order to promote a more positive general/overall mood following a slight transgression.

Granting/Seeking Forgiveness Behaviors

To obtain a measure of behavioral forgiveness on behalf of the victims (granting forgiveness), we examined the amount of tickets participants gave to their partner during the final distribution round (Carlisle et al., 2012). Results indicate that participants in the control condition gave fewer tickets to their partner during Round 3 than participants in the message-only, mindfulness, and planning conditions. However, when comparing this act of behavioral forgiveness with self-reported reasons for the distribution decision, we found that participants in the mindfulness condition were more likely than participants in the control condition to explain their distribution decision as an act of granting forgiveness. We found further support for this act of granting forgiveness among participants in the mindfulness condition when examining additional reasons for the distribution decision. Participants in the mindfulness condition gave more tickets to their partner than the control condition, because they wanted to be fair and wanted to help their partner. Furthermore, participants in the mindfulness condition reported their distribution decision was based less on wanting payback for an earlier round compared to participants in the control condition — taken together, these behaviors (being fair, helping the

other person, and turning down an opportunity for revenge) are consistent with actions related to granting forgiveness (Baskin & Enright, 2004; Wade, Worthington, & Meyer, 2005).

These findings demonstrate that participants receiving mindfulness training engaged in a behavioral act of granting forgiveness following the slight transgression. Mentioned previously when considering the results of Study 1, research suggests that rumination following a transgression experience is related to the potential for victims of a transgression to retaliate and/or seek justice (McCullough et al., 1997). Perhaps the act of practicing mindfulness (e.g., redirecting negative thoughts and feelings following a transgression) allowed victims a way to channel a desire for justice/payback into something more positive. The continued practice of mindfulness might serve to further increase behavioral acts of granting forgiveness following slight transgression experiences.

Similar to victims in the current study, we attempted to assess both self-reported and behavioral acts of seeking forgiveness among perpetrators. Previous research (Carlisle et al., 2012) has utilized the distribution of resources task as a means to create a transgression experience in which participants serve as victims. To the best of our knowledge, no other studies have attempted to use the distribution of resources task as a means to elicit a transgression in which the participants in the study serve as perpetrators. In order to measure a behavioral act of seeking forgiveness, we gave perpetrators in the current study the option to write a short note to their partner at the end of the distribution of resources task (after they received a note from their partner letting them know their partner was upset by their distribution decision). We thought that the act of writing a note as well as the content of the note could serve as a behavioral measure of granting forgiveness. Although not required, some perpetrators wrote a note to their partner;

however, we found the content of these notes was inconsistent and often not related to the distribution decision made by the perpetrators.

Given the inconsistent content and small amount of notes written by the participants, we were unable to assess behavioral acts of seeking forgiveness for perpetrators. We did, however, collect responses to self-report measures in order to better ascertain attempts to seek forgiveness. Findings suggest that that if a perpetrator were to interact with their partner, he or she would take responsibility for the distribution decision and explain the decision; however, they would be less likely to apologize to their partner, try to make amends with their partner, and express concern for their partner. Potential explanations for the lack of apology as well as a lack of making amends/expressing concern may be related to the nature of the transgression and relationship closeness. Perpetrators in the current study may have perceived their transgression as minor. As such, the situation may not warrant an apology. Explaining the situation may be more likely than apologizing given the slight transgression. Furthermore, participants in the current study were strangers, so it may not have been appropriate for perpetrators to try and make amends with their partner as well as express a genuine concern for their partner. Future research might consider the use of a stronger manipulation. Doing so may prove useful in terms of gaining a better understanding of seeking forgiveness behaviors following a more significant transgression.

Limitations and Future Directions

Using a standardized transgression experience, we were able to further test the effectiveness of the forgiveness message and training techniques used in Study 1. As a whole, we found partial support for our research hypotheses. General/overall mood, attitudes toward granting/seeking forgiveness, and forgiveness granting/seeking behaviors were influenced by our technique training conditions. Similar to Study 1, the mindfulness training appeared to elicit the

greatest benefits in terms of the measured outcome variables. This result was especially pronounced for victims of the standardized transgression experience. For example, victims of the slight transgression who received the mindfulness training reported greater benefits of granting forgiveness. These participants were also more likely to engage in a behavioral expression of forgiveness; participants in the mindfulness condition gave more tickets to their partner during the third round of the distribution and reported their decision was based on expressing forgiveness (as well as other behaviors related to granting forgiveness). These findings imply that receiving a message expressing motives/reasons for forgiveness as well as mindfulness training might be advantageous for victims who encounter a slight interpersonal transgression.

Although these findings help to expand previous forgiveness literature, limitations of the current study should be noted. First, our sample represents a typical college sample with limited diversity. Similar to Study 1, this limited diversity might impact the generalizability of our findings to other young adult samples. Future research would benefit from recruiting a more diverse sample. Second, our results indicate that our transgression situation for perpetrators (i.e., receiving an upset note from the partner following the perpetrators distribution decision) may not have been a strong manipulation. Previous research (Carlisle et al., 2012) has utilized the distribution of resources task for victims of a slight transgression. No other study to our knowledge has used this task to elicit a behavioral response for perpetrators. Our attempt in using this task to include both victims and perpetrators is a benefit of the current study; however, future research would benefit from strengthening the transgression manipulation. For instance, researchers should take into account that this task does not account for intentionality on the part of the perpetrator and that intent (as well as remorse and/or guilt; Baumeister et al., 1995) may be an important factor perpetrators consider when seeking forgiveness (Enright, 1996).

Third, our behavioral measure of seeking forgiveness, writing a note at the end of the task, may have been a limitation. We gave participants the option to write a note to their partner and provided verbal instructions that the content of the note was up to the participant to decide. We also indicated to the perpetrators that there was not enough time for a face-to-face interaction, as well as not enough time for a third distribution round. As a result, very few participants actually wrote a note to their partner. We may have inadvertently conveyed the idea that there was not enough time for the participants to write a note and/or that the participants could save themselves time and leave instead of write a note. For those who did write a note, the content of the note was not detailed enough to garner meaning in terms of the intent to ask for forgiveness. Furthermore, for participants who did not write a note, we were unable to determine why they did not write to their partner. Was it because they wanted to avoid their partner (i.e., not ask for forgiveness), because we told them the note was optional, and/or because we did not provide explicit instructions for writing the note? We did ask participants to self-report on how they would go about interacting with their partner given the chance; however, the response items provided were all positively worded in terms of things a person might do if he or she were seeking forgiveness (e.g., apologize, explain the situation, try to make amends, express concern, etc.). Future research might benefit from providing more explicit instructions for writing a note as well as require that participants write a note to their partner. A clear option for participants to select that relates to the intent to avoid the other person and/or choose not to talk to/interact with the other person may be beneficial for future research. The manner in which the participants wrote a note (via pen/pencil) also may have been a potential limitation. Due to current technological advances, college students may be more likely to communicate with another person using an electronic device (e.g., cell phone) than a pen/pencil note. Future research using

an electronic format for communication between the participant and his/her partner may be more beneficial as a measure of behavioral forgiveness seeking. For instance, at the beginning of the study, a researcher could tell the participant to include a cell phone number as form of contact if she/he won the \$100 gift-card. During the final distribution round, the researcher could instruct the participant to text her/his partner and provide a number that the participant believes belongs to her/his partner; however, this text would be sent to the researcher (as opposed to the actual partner) to be analyzed for forgiveness seeking content.

Finally, although our findings indicate that the training technique of mindfulness may help victims of a slight transgression engage in behavioral forgiveness, we note the small effect size of these results (partial η^2 ranged from .01 to .38 for the variables of interest; Cohen, 1992). Findings suggest that mindfulness may be a helpful technique following a slight transgression, however, we would not expect large effects. Continued research assessing the effect of mindfulness (as well as other techniques and motives) may serve to further promote the forgiveness process for both victims and perpetrators of a slight transgression.

Despite these limitations, the findings from the Study 2 demonstrate applied implications for future research and practice. Slight transgressions are common experiences for young adults; however, managing these types of transgressions might be difficult, especially for victims. Applying a technique like mindfulness, a strategy that generates emotional calm, focus, and positivity, may aid in the management of these everyday slights as well as increase positive general/overall mood. Continued research exploring the effectiveness of mindfulness as well as other techniques/strategies in relation to slight transgressions is warranted.

Chapter 4 - General Discussion

Summary of the Current Research

Purpose of the Current Research

To summarize, the main purpose of the current dissertation was to explore factors relevant to forgiveness granting (for victims of a transgression) and seeking (for perpetrators of a transgression) among young adults. Motivation as well as ability were examined to assess their effectiveness in promoting mood, attitudes, and behaviors relevant to the granting/seeking forgiveness process. Across two studies, our participants were exposed to a message expressing motives/reasons for granting and seeking forgiveness. Based on previous research (Jeter & Brannon, 2015), this message emphasized the importance of forgiveness as an altruistic behavior observed by most religious, ethical, and social systems. The message also emphasized that holding a grudge, ruminating about a transgression, and harboring negative emotions may impact the individual's mental and physical health. Participants also were trained to practice and apply a technique (mindfulness or implementation planning) that may facilitate forgiveness granting/seeking.

For Study 1, we recruited participants who self-identified as being a victim (i.e., someone hurt/wronged/mistreated you) or perpetrator (e.g., you hurt/wronged/mistreated someone) of a recent interpersonal transgression. Participants were randomly assigned to one of four training conditions. These conditions included: a message-only group, a mindfulness group (forgiveness message paired with mindfulness training), a planning group (a forgiveness message paired with a planning training), and a control group (no forgiveness message and no training). See Figure 1. A goal of Study 1 was to compare the effectiveness of the training techniques in promoting forgiveness granting behaviors for victims of a transgression and forgiveness seeking behaviors

for perpetrators of a transgression. An additional goal of Study 1 was to examine whether a training technique paired with a message about the importance of granting/seeking forgiveness would influence the participant's attitudes about forgiveness as well as their general/overall mood and mood toward the other person involved in the transgression.

We found that victims in Study 1, who were exposed to both a forgiveness message and a training technique (either mindfulness or planning), reported more positive thoughts, feelings, and behaviors toward the other person involved in the transgression as well as less desire to seek revenge against the other person. Due to the limited research conducted on mindfulness and planning in regards to the forgiveness process, this finding adds new knowledge to previous forgiveness literature. Practicing a mindfulness technique and/or a planning technique may help young adults involved in a transgression to feel less negative (more positive) toward the other person involved. Releasing negative TFB and replacing these with more positive TFB, as well as giving up the desire to seek revenge are well-documented signs of the forgiveness process, especially for victims of a transgression (Enright, 1991; Enright, et al., 1998; Gassin & Enright, 1995; McCullough et al., 1997; Thompson et al., 2005; Worthington, Berry, & Parrott, 2001).

Results also indicate that participants (including both victims and perpetrators) in the mindfulness condition reported more positive general/overall mood, more favorable attitudes toward granting/seeking forgiveness, and less desire to avoid the other person involved in the transgression experience. Previous research indicates that repetitive rumination is related negative affect (Nolen-Hoeksema et al., 1994) and that this rumination can hinder the overall forgiveness process (Berry et al., 2001; Feldman et al., 2010; McCullough et al., 2007) for both victims and perpetrators. Our findings indicate that the practice of mindfulness may immediately help individuals to feel better (i.e., overall/general positive mood) after thinking about a

transgression experience as well as encourage individuals to potentially engage in the forgiveness process (i.e., more favorable attitudes toward forgiveness and less desire to avoid the person and/or transgression situation). Overall, across multiple measures, receiving both a forgiveness message and training technique influenced the measured variables of interest. This result was most notable for participants self-identifying as victims of a transgression as well as participants exposed to the mindfulness training condition.

For Study 2, we measured the same forgiveness message (motives) and training techniques (ability) used in Study 1 as well as similar outcome measures. A distribution of resources task (Carlisle et al., 2012) was used in order to simulate a standardized transgression experience. The design of Study 2 allowed us to create a transgression situation in a laboratory setting that modeled slight transgression situations that may occur on a daily basis (e.g., slight annoyances/frustrations). This design also enabled us to control for contextual factors (i.e., the nature and severity of the transgression as well as relationship closeness) that may impact the granting/seeking forgiveness process. Participants were randomly assigned to one of the four conditions (message-only; mindfulness/message; planning/message; control). Participants were informed that they would complete a distribution of resources task in which they and another participant would complete a series of distribution rounds. During each round, ten raffle tickets were distributed. These raffle tickets were good for a drawing for a \$100 gift-card. For each distribution round, participants were told that the tickets could be distributed either by chance (tickets were distributed randomly), by their partner (the other participant would have the opportunity to decide how the tickets were distributed), or by the participant him/herself. Before each round, participants were notified who the distribution agent was. We pre-arranged all rounds of the task in order to create a slight transgression experience. Participants assigned to be

a victim of a slight transgression participated in three distribution rounds (see Figure 2). During round one, victims received 2 out of 10 tickets by chance. Round 2 served as the slight transgression experience in that the victim's partner gave 1 out of 10 tickets. During round three, victims had an opportunity to distribute the tickets. Participants assigned to be a perpetrator of a slight transgression completed two distribution rounds (see Figure 3). During Round 1, perpetrators received 1 out of 10 tickets by chance. During Round 2, perpetrators were given the opportunity to distribute the tickets. Following their distribution decision, we gave the participant a pre-written note from his/her partner. This note indicated that the partner was upset by the participant's distribution decision.

Results of Study 2 suggest that participants exposed to a training technique (either mindfulness or planning) reported more positive general/overall mood compared to the message-only and control conditions. In addition, we found that victims of the standardized transgression reported more benefits of forgiveness if they practiced the mindfulness technique compared to participants who practiced planning and participants who did not receive technique training. This finding suggests that attitudes about forgiveness may be influenced for the better if young adults, particularly victims of a slight transgression, are exposed to both reasons (motives) and techniques (ability) related to the forgiveness process. The Theory of Planned Behavior (Ajzen, 1985) indicates that favorable attitudes about the anticipated outcomes of a behavior may influence an individual to engage in that specified behavior. Furthermore, the combination of a participant's favorable attitudes about the anticipated outcomes of a behavior as well as their ability to perform the behavior serve to further increase the likelihood that the behavior will occur.

Victims of the standardized transgression also were more likely to engage in behavioral forgiveness (measured by the number of tickets given to the partner during the last round of the distribution task) as well as self-report more expressions of forgiveness if they practiced the mindfulness technique. These findings demonstrate that participants receiving mindfulness training engaged in a behavioral act of granting forgiveness following the slight transgression. Mentioned previously when considering the results of Study 1, research suggests that rumination following a transgression experience is related to the potential for victims of a transgression to retaliate and/or seek justice (McCullough et al., 1997). Perhaps the act of practicing mindfulness (e.g., learning to reframe negative thoughts and feelings following a transgression) provided victims with a way to channel a desire for justice/payback into something more positive. The continued practice of mindfulness might further serve to increase behavioral acts of granting forgiveness following slight transgression experiences.

The results of Study 1 and Study 2 generally indicate that receiving both a forgiveness message emphasizing motives to grant/seek forgiveness as well as a training technique may be useful for young adults encountering interpersonal conflict. More specifically, our findings indicate that the practice of mindfulness may be the most helpful/most effective technique when taking into account the measured variables of interest for both Study 1 and Study 2. Also, victims of an interpersonal transgression might benefit the most from exposure to motives for granting forgiveness as well as mindfulness training.

Importance of the Current Research

The current research fills a gap in previous forgiveness literature in several ways. First, we investigated the forgiveness granting/seeking process among young adults. College-age students make up a unique subset of individuals who are particularly prone to experience

interpersonal conflict (Bono & McCullough 2004; Mullet & Girard 2000; Ross et al., 1999). When compared to older adults, college age students may have more difficulty managing interpersonal conflict (Birditt & Fingerman, 2005). One potential explanation for this difference involves the coping strategies used by older adults compared to younger adults when managing interpersonal conflict (Luong et al., 2010). For instance, older adults are more likely than younger adults to engage in conflict strategies that minimize negative social experiences (Ghaemmaghami et al., 2011). Subsequently, these strategies help older adults to alleviate interpersonal conflict (Worthington, 2005) and support healthy relational development (Cosgrove & Konstam, 2008; Toussaint & Webb, 2005). Younger adults are more likely to utilize confrontational strategies (e.g., yelling and/or criticizing) that may worsen an interpersonal conflict (Birditt & Fingerman, 2005). As such, our research investigating strategies that might assist young adults in alleviating interpersonal conflict (given their susceptibility to this conflict) adds unique knowledge to existing forgiveness literature (Sorkin & Rook, 2006). In Study 1, we found that young adults who experienced a recent interpersonal transgression reported that they had not yet been able to resolve the conflict; however, the participants were interested in engaging in the forgiveness process. In Study 2, we found a similar result. Participants seemed confident that they could grant/seek forgiveness following a transgression experience (i.e., high control beliefs); however, when assessing behavioral measures, we found that granting/seeking forgiveness might be more difficult than participants originally anticipated. These findings support previous research stating that managing the forgiveness process can often be an effortful and difficult endeavor (Riek, 2010; Younger et al., 2004). Our attempt to explore why (motives/reasons) and how (ability) young adults may engage this process adds new knowledge to an ongoing issue within forgiveness research.

Second, we designed the current research to assess forgiveness from both a victim's and perpetrator's perspective. Compared to forgiveness research conducted from the victim's point of view, the perpetrator's perspective is severely understudied (Baumeister et al., 1991; Chiaramello et al., 2008; Riek, 2010; Witvliet et al., 2002). The forgiveness process may be impacted differently based on transgression roles (Enright, 1996). For example, rumination on behalf of the victim following a transgression is a common occurrence and negatively impacts the overall forgiveness granting process (McCullough et al., 2007). Furthermore, paranoid tendencies, anxiety, and fear in relation to what will happen following a transgression are often associated with a perpetrator's inability to willingly seek forgiveness (Chiaramello et al., 2008). As such, considering both perspectives not only advances previous forgiveness research, but also serves to more accurately reflect the overall forgiveness process.

Finally, the most significant contribution of the current research involved the exploration of two training techniques and their effectiveness in promoting forgiveness. In general, our results demonstrate that exposure to forgiveness motives and a training technique impacts forgiveness granting/seeking behaviors, attitudes, and mood. However, the mindfulness technique was the most effective/most useful strategy for both Study 1 and Study 2, namely for victims of a transgression experience. Previous research describes mindfulness as a technique that serves as a mechanism for individuals to practice being aware and attune to information occurring in the "here-and-now" (Webb et al., 2013, p. 236). While practicing mindfulness, individuals are encouraged to remain open to and acknowledge thoughts and feelings that occur in a non-judgmental and non-reactive fashion. Mindfulness may serve as a useful and unique strategy, because this technique emphasizes the importance of reducing negative rumination as well as the importance of reframing negative thoughts, feelings, and behaviors into more positive

and productive thoughts, feelings, and behaviors (Deyo et al., 2009; Kumar, et al., 2008; Ramel et al., 2004). It is important to note that our findings suggest planning may also be a promising and effective technique when assessing some variables of interest. Planning is a technique that may help individuals to carry out a desired goal/behavior (Achtziger et al., 2008) and may assist young adults in managing interpersonal conflict; however, the effectiveness of planning may be to a lesser extent than mindfulness.

Taken as a whole, the current findings (across two unique studies) demonstrate the effectiveness of mindfulness for young adults struggling with interpersonal conflict and, to a lesser extent, the effectiveness of planning. These findings contribute novel information to previous forgiveness literature, especially when taking into account that few prior studies have explored mindfulness and planning in relation to forgiveness granting/seeking (Achtziger et al., 2008; Oman et al., 2008; Shapiro et al., 2008). Given these preliminary findings, future research should be conducted to learn more about the effectiveness of these strategies on the forgiveness process.

General Limitations

Although specific limitations for Study 1 and Study 2 are noted in previous chapters, it is important to address a potential limitation for both studies in terms of the motives and training techniques being more effective based on the transgression role. We hypothesized that the motives and techniques would be equally effective for both victims and perpetrators of a transgression; however, overall, the motives and techniques used in the current research appear to be more effective for victims of a transgression. When recruiting participants for Study 1, we assumed that individuals who self-identified as perpetrators of a transgression wanted to ask for forgiveness (e.g., apologize to the other person involved in transgression experience). We also

assumed that perpetrators of the current study may have difficulty apologizing based on potential anxieties and/or fears about how the other person involved in the transgression would react (Chiaramello et al., 2008). However, in Study 1, we did not ask perpetrators if they thought they owed the other person an apology; we asked them if they did something to upset/wrong/mistreat another person and if they wanted to resolve the conflict through forgiveness. In hindsight, there may be a subtle difference between asking someone if they think an apology is owed/warranted and if they want to resolve an interpersonal conflict through forgiveness.

Our hypotheses about the effectiveness of the current motives and techniques for perpetrators were rooted in previous research that states perpetrators of a transgression are often anxious about asking for forgiveness. This may be because the perpetrator has little control over how the victim/other person will react (Chiaramello et al., 2008). With this in mind, we anticipated that mindfulness and/or planning would help perpetrators to alleviate some of this anxiety, and subsequently, help the perpetrator to ask for forgiveness. Additional research suggests that there are other factors that relate to whether or not a perpetrator asks for forgiveness. For example, attempts to seek forgiveness and apologize may depend on if the perpetrator believes that what he/she did was wrong (Baumeister et al., 1995; Exline & Baumeister, 2000; Exline, Baumeister, Zell, Kraft, Witvliet, 2008). In our study, we assumed that the perpetrator's actions warranted an apology, however, we did not directly assess this. When asking about the severity of the offense (in Study 1), we were able to get an overall rating, but we were unable to tell if the high severity rating was because the perpetrator thought their offense was wrong and/or if severity represented a rating of how upset the other person was following the transgression. Knowing if the perpetrators thought that their offense warranted an apology would be helpful. For example, in Study 2 perpetrators indicated that they would be less

likely to apologize than to explain their distribution decision. Perpetrators may have felt that their actions were not wrong, and as such, did not warrant an apology. In Study 1, perpetrators also may have felt that their actions did not warrant an apology. Previous research also suggests that perpetrators may not apologize following a transgression if the other person involved also did something to hurt/wrong/upset the perpetrator (Fincham, 2000; Kearns & Fincham, 2005) or if the other person has done something similar in the past (Exline et al., 2008). We did not assess the bi-directionality of transgression roles in the current research; however, we believe that this factor might impact whether or not a perpetrator might express an apology and/or feel that an apology is warranted.

In addition to these factors, the forgiveness message used in the current study also may help to explain why the motives and training techniques seem to be more effective for victims than perpetrators. The forgiveness message used in the current studies was based on previous research assessing motives/reasons that might persuade victims of a transgression to grant forgiveness (Jeter & Brannon, 2015). Limited prior research has been conducted on motives/reasons that might persuade perpetrators to ask for forgiveness. Therefore, we used a similar forgiveness message for both victims and perpetrators. Perhaps the message emphasizing the health benefits of forgiveness pertains more to a victim's perspective than perpetrator's perspective. A message that takes into account factors, such as the bidirectional nature of transgression roles (e.g., you can benefit from asking for forgiveness even if the other person should apologize too) might be better suited for perpetrators of a transgression. Future research would benefit from taking into account these factors in order to better tailor a forgiveness message for perpetrators of a transgression.

Transgression experiences are complex and numerous factors may impact the forgiveness process for victims and perpetrators. When conducting the current research, we attempted to examine factors relevant to the forgiveness granting and seeking process for victims and perpetrators, respectively. We realize that some factors, such as if the perpetrator thought that his/her actions warranted an apology as well as if the other person involved played a role in the transgression, may impact this complex process. In the future, assessing these factors might provide more accurate information in terms of the effectiveness of the motives and training techniques in promoting the forgiveness process. Given the significant results of the current research, if perpetrators are at a point in the forgiveness process in which they feel that an apology is warranted, however they feel anxious or fearful of how their apology attempt will be received, then practicing mindfulness and/or planning may be useful. Continued research may help to verify the effectiveness of these motives and training techniques.

In addition to these general limitations related to perpetrators within the current research, we also note additional demographic and dispositional factors that were not assessed in the current research but may impact the effectiveness of the mindfulness and planning techniques. For example, gender has been cited in previous forgiveness research (Miller, Worthington, & McDaniel, 2008) as a potential demographic variable of interest. Although we did not measure gender differences in relation to the effectiveness of a forgiveness message and technique, future research might benefit from this assessment. Future research examining dispositional factors, such as general tendencies to grant (Brown, 2003) and seek (Sandage et al., 2000) forgiveness as well as empathy (McCullough, 2001) also may provide useful information in terms of the effectiveness of the message and training techniques (e.g., individuals who are naturally less forgiving and empathetic may benefit more from these motives and techniques). Furthermore,

individuals who have a tendency to ruminate (e.g., a victim of a transgression experiencing persistent anger rumination) about a transgression experience (McCullough et al., 2007), as well as individuals who have a tendency to become anxious (e.g., a perpetrators feeling overly nervous or anxious to seek forgiveness) following a transgression experience (Chiaromello et al., 2008) may benefit more from the motives and techniques used in the current research. Future research assessing these demographic and dispositional factors may serve to promote our understanding of the forgiveness process overall.

Finally, future research may benefit from including a measure of social desirability. Although we advertised the current research as either a general study on forgiveness or a general study on emotion regulation in order to reduce sampling biases, we did not assess the extent to which our participants may have responded in a socially desirable manner. However, our results suggest that social desirability may not have been a concern for the current research, given several instances in which we found significant differences between our message-only and technique/message conditions (if participants responded in socially desirable ways we would expect that the message-only condition would be as effective as the technique/message conditions).

Implications and Conclusions

Across two unique studies with varying methodologies, we found similar general findings. When considering a real transgression occurring within a close relationship (Study 1) as well as a slight, standardized transgression occurring between strangers (Study 2), receiving a training technique like mindfulness may enhance positive mood, promote more favorable attitudes toward forgiveness, and increase behaviors related to forgiveness granting/seeking. The similar findings from Study 1 and Study 2 demonstrate the generalizability of these results.

Despite differences between these two studies in terms of the type of transgression and relationship closeness, practicing mindfulness (and to a lesser extent planning) may help young adults to better manage interpersonal conflict.

Overall, the generalizability of these findings demonstrates implications for future research as well as applied benefits. For example, the results of the current study are particularly impressive when considering that participants completed short training sessions (lasting approximately five minutes). Past research examining forgiveness interventions (Wade et al., 2005) generally utilizes more long-term approaches, such as training interventions that last for six to eight weeks. Our findings show that shorter training sessions with easy to implement techniques may be effective for young adults managing interpersonal conflict within a variety of contexts. Although the effects of the current study are considered small, perhaps with more practice and time to apply these techniques, more behavioral expressions of granting and seeking forgiveness may occur. More research is needed in order to replicate the current findings as well as further examine the overall effectiveness of these techniques on the forgiveness process.

From an applied standpoint, forgiveness is well documented as a counseling resource for individuals who wish to reduce interpersonal conflict (Konstam, Holmes, & Levine, 2003; Worthington, 2005). Clinicians working with young adults who encounter a variety of interpersonal conflict situations (e.g., severe transgressions between close friends and/or slight, everyday frustrations/annoyances) might expose these individuals to the motives and techniques used in the current research. If young adults want to resolve these conflict situations, then these easy to practice and implement techniques and helpful motives may positively impact their intent to engage in forgiveness. Continued research efforts on the effectiveness of the motives and techniques that promote forgiveness are warranted. The continuation of this research may help

young adults to practice and improve the skills/strategies needed to successfully manage interpersonal conflict.

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Appendix A - Study 1: Prescreening Items

Victims of a Transgression:

1. In the PAST 6 MONTHS, have you been wronged or mistreated by someone close to you? (Yes/No)
2. If you answered “yes” to question #1, please indicate the nature of your relationship with the person who wronged or mistreated you. If you have been wronged/mistreated by more than one person who is close to you in the PAST 6 MONTHS, then you may select more than one response. [Did not answer “yes” to # 1; co-worker; distant family member (e.g., aunt, uncle, cousin, in-law); immediate family member (e.g., parents, siblings, grandparents, children); friend; roommate; romantic partner; other (specify)]
3. If you selected "other" for question # 2, please indicate the nature of your relationship with the person who wronged or mistreated you in the space below. (free response)
4. If you answered “yes” to question #1, please indicate the nature of the hurt, wrongdoing, or mistreatment by someone close to you. If the person close to you hurt you in multiple ways or if more than one person hurt you during the PAST 6 MONTHS, you may select more than one response. [Did not answer “yes” to # 1; abused you; betrayed you/violated your trust; criticized you; disappointed you; lied to you; rejected you; unfaithful/cheated on you; other (specify)]
5. If you selected "other" for question #3, please specify the nature of the hurt, wrongdoing, or mistreatment by someone close to you. (free response)
6. If you answered “yes” to question #1, please rate the severity of hurt you experienced because you were wronged or mistreated by someone close to you in the PAST 6 MONTHS. (Did not answer “yes” to # 1; extremely hurtful; hurtful; moderately hurtful; slightly hurtful; not at all hurtful)
7. If you answered “yes” to question #1, how close was your relationship with the person who hurt you BEFORE the offense occurred? (not at all/extremely)
8. If you answered “yes” to question #1, BEFORE the offense, to what extent were you committed to having a positive relationship with the person who hurt you? (not at all/extremely)
9. I have forgiven the person who hurt/wronged/mistreated you? Forgiveness meaning that you’ve released negative emotions (e.g., hostility, resentment, and anger) towards the person who hurt you. (strongly disagree/strongly agree)

Perpetrators of a Transgression:

1. In the PAST 6 MONTHS, have you wronged or mistreated someone close to you? (Yes/No)
2. If you answered “yes” to question #1, please indicate the nature of your relationship with the person you wronged or mistreated you. If you wronged/mistreated more than one person close to you in the PAST 6 MONTHS, then you may select more than one response. [Did not answer “yes” to # 1; co-worker; distant family member (e.g., aunt, uncle, cousin, in-law); immediate family member (e.g., parents, siblings, grandparents, children); friend; roommate; romantic partner; other (specify)]
3. If you selected "other" for question # 2, please indicate the nature of your relationship with the person you wronged or mistreated. (free response)
4. If you answered “yes” to question #1, please indicate the nature of the hurt, wrongdoing, or mistreatment you did to someone close to you. If you hurt someone close to you

multiple ways or if you hurt more than one person during the PAST 6 MONTHS, you may select more than one response. [Did not answer “yes” to # 1; abused someone close to me; betrayed/violated the trust of someone close to me; criticized someone close to me; disappointed someone close to me; lied to someone close to me; rejected someone close to me; unfaithful/cheated on someone close to me; other (specify)]

5. If you selected "other" for question #3, please specify the nature of the hurt, wrongdoing, or mistreatment you did to someone close to you. (free response)
6. If you answered “yes” to question #1, please rate the severity of hurt YOU experience because you wronged or mistreated someone close to you in the PAST 6 MONTHS. (Did not answer “yes” to # 1; extremely hurtful; hurtful; moderately hurtful; slightly hurtful; not at all hurtful)
7. If you answered “yes” to question #1, how close was your relationship with the person you hurt BEFORE the offense occurred? (not at all/extremely)
8. If you answered “yes” to question #1, BEFORE the offense, to what extent were you committed to having a positive relationship with the person you hurt? (not at all/extremely)
9. I have tried to seek forgiveness from the person who I hurt/wronged/mistreated? Seeking forgiveness meaning that you’ve tried to alleviate the negative feelings (e.g., resentment, hostility, and anger) the victim has toward you. (strongly disagree/strongly agree)
10. The person I hurt has forgiven me. (strongly disagree/strongly agree)

Appendix B - Study 1: SONA Recruitment Information

Training Conditions: Victims

Participants in this study will be asked for information about a RECENT (within the past 6 months) time when they were deeply hurt/mistreated/wronged by someone close to them AND have yet to resolve this conflict. Thus, participating in this study REQUIRES that...

1. you've experienced an interpersonal transgression perpetrated by someone close to you (e.g., roommate; friend; family member; romantic partner) within the past 6 months
2. the interpersonal transgression has not yet been resolved

This study will occur in a lab-setting and will last for approximately 1 hour. Participants will complete questionnaires to assess conflict within interpersonal relationships as well as engage in a training session that may help alleviate interpersonal conflict. Participants completing this study will receive 1 in-lab research credit.

Training Conditions: Perpetrators

Participants in this study will be asked for information about a RECENT (within the past 6 months) time when they deeply hurt/mistreated/wronged someone close to them AND have yet to resolve this conflict. Thus, participating in this study REQUIRES that...

1. you perpetrated an interpersonal transgression against someone close to you (e.g., roommate; friend; family member; romantic partner) within the past 6 months
2. the interpersonal transgression has not yet been resolved

This study will occur in a lab-setting and will last for approximately 1 hour. Participants will complete questionnaires to assess conflict within interpersonal relationships as well as engage in a training session that may help alleviate interpersonal conflict. Participants completing this study will receive 1 in-lab research credit.

Control Condition: Victims

Participants in this study will be asked for information about a RECENT (within the past 6 months) time when they were deeply hurt/mistreated/wronged by someone close to them AND have yet to resolve this conflict. Thus, participating in this study REQUIRES that...

1. you've experienced an interpersonal transgression perpetrated by someone close to you (e.g., roommate; friend; family member; romantic partner) within the past 6 months
2. the interpersonal transgression has not yet been resolved

This study will occur in a lab-setting and will last for approximately 1 hour. Participants will complete questionnaires to assess conflict within interpersonal relationships. Participants completing this study will receive 1 in-lab research credit.

Control Condition: Perpetrators

Participants in this study will be asked for information about a RECENT (within the past 6 months) time when they deeply hurt/mistreated/wronged someone close to them AND have yet to resolve this conflict. Thus, participating in this study REQUIRES that...

1. you perpetrated an interpersonal transgression against someone close to you (e.g., roommate; friend; family member; romantic partner) within the past 6 months
2. the interpersonal transgression has not yet been resolved

This study will occur in a lab-setting and will last for approximately 1 hour. Participants will complete questionnaires to assess conflict within interpersonal relationships. Participants completing this study will receive 1 in-lab research credit.

Appendix C - Study 1: Forgiveness Granting/Seeking Message

Consequences of not granting forgiveness:

Conflict within interpersonal relationships is often unavoidable, so it is very common for people who we are close to and who we care about to hurt/wrong/mistreat us. When someone we are close to wrongs us it is natural to feel upset (e.g., angry; hostile; resentful; annoyed) and to be hurt (e.g., sad; depressed; embarrassed). It is also very common to have repetitive thoughts about what the person did.

Although it is natural to feel this way initially, most religious, ethical, and social systems indicate that letting go of these negative emotions and forgiving the person who hurt us is the right thing to do. People are taught from a young age that carrying negative emotions, such as resentment and anger, or holding a grudge against someone is wrong.

Research also tells us that continuing to think about the transgression and harboring negative emotions towards the person who hurt you can be bad for your mental and physical health. Although many people think that not forgiving the person who hurt you provides a sense of control over the situation, in reality, obsessing about the person and the event gives the transgressor more power. By continuing to relive the event, the other person continues to hurt you. Research also shows that people who do not forgive have an increased risk of physical health problems, such as cardiovascular disease and premature death.

Harboring negative emotions toward the person who hurt you can not only impact your health, but also negatively impact your daily productivity. Imagine if you are preparing for a very important exam and someone close to you wrongs you – you may be distracted from studying for the exam, because you are thinking about what the person did to you and what you should do about the situation.

Given the consequences of not forgiving, it is important to learn how to release negative emotions and thoughts associated with a transgression, especially when you are in a situation that requires your full attention (e.g., like when you are studying/preparing for an important exam).

Consequences of not seeking forgiveness:

Conflict within interpersonal relationships is often unavoidable, so it is very common for us to hurt/wrong/mistreat people we are close to and who we care about. When we wrong someone close to us it is natural to feel upset (e.g., mad; resentful; hostile) and to be hurt (e.g., sad; depressed; embarrassed). It is also very common to have repetitive thoughts about what we did to the other person.

Although it is natural to feel this way initially, most religious, ethical, and social systems indicate that letting go of these negative emotions and seeking forgiveness from the person we hurt is the right thing to do. People are taught from a young age that carrying negative emotions, such as resentment and anger, and not seeking forgiveness (e.g., confessing; apologizing) is wrong.

Research also tells us that continuing to think about what you did to the other person and harboring negative emotions can be bad for your mental and physical health. Although many people think that not seeking forgiveness from the person you hurt provides a sense of control over the situation, in reality, obsessing about the person and the event lessens your control and can contribute to social isolation and poor self-esteem. By continuing to relive the event, you not only hurt the other person, but also yourself. Research also shows that people who are not willing

to seek forgiveness have an increased risk of physical health problems, such as cardiovascular disease.

Not seeking forgiveness can not only impact your health, but also negatively impact your daily productivity. Imagine that you hurt someone close to you, but you are in the process of studying for a very important exam – you may be distracted from studying for the exam, because you are thinking about what you did to this person and what you should do about the situation.

Given the consequences of not seeking forgiveness, it is important to learn how to release negative emotions and thoughts associated with a transgression, especially when you are in a situation that requires your full attention (e.g., like when you are studying/preparing for an important exam).

Appendix D - Study 1: Description of Technique

Description of Mindfulness: Mindfulness is a widely-used practice that can help you to focus on training your attention and awareness. The goal of mindfulness is to produce emotional calm, mental clarity, self-awareness, and/or concentration. Mindfulness may be effective at helping you cope with a variety of negative thoughts and emotions that may arise from someone close to you hurting or upsetting you (hurting or upsetting someone close to you). Mindfulness allows you to be aware of negative thoughts and feelings that are associated with being hurt by (hurting) someone close to you by enabling you to be aware of these thoughts/feelings and to let these thoughts/feelings pass in a non-judgmental manner. In this session you will learn how to practice mindfulness. We will start the training by practicing mindfulness using two hypothetical scenarios of someone close to you upsetting you (you upsetting someone close to you).

Description of Planning: Research indicates that people are more likely to engage in granting (seeking forgiveness) if they have a specific plan for how they will overcome the negative feelings and thoughts associated with the transgression. Planning can also help when we find ourselves thinking about the transgression during times when we should be focused on something else. Making plans can be very simple and typically phrased as “if-then” statements. In other words, to help pursue a goal of forgiving someone/seeking forgiveness or resisting distracting emotions/thoughts, you can make a plan that if something specific happens, then you will react in a specific way that is consistent with your goal. In this session you will learn to practice planning. We will start the training by practicing planning using two hypothetical scenarios of someone close to you upsetting you (you upsetting someone close to you).

Appendix E - Study 1: Practice Script

Mindfulness Script: Today you will be practicing the technique of mindfulness. We will practice mindfulness using a hypothetical scenario of someone hurting you (you hurting someone). During our practice session please allow yourself to switch from the usual mode of doing to a mode of non-doing, of simply being.

(Victim perspective): First, let's imagine a hypothetical situation in which someone close to you wrongs you and the thoughts and emotions associated with this transgression. Please close your eyes and imagine that you are studying for a very important exam in a class that is required for you to graduate. This exam is so important that if you do not do well on it you may not pass the class (or get a desirable grade in the class). As you are studying for this exam, you find out that one of your closest friends has violated your trust by sharing confidential information you specifically asked this friend not to share. As a result, you feel deeply hurt, betrayed, and angry towards your friend. You thought you could trust this person, so you feel resentful about what he/she did. Take a moment to think about how upset you would be in this situation. Think about how this person betraying your trust might occupy your mind during a time when you should really be concentrating on studying for your exam, not worrying about what to do about the situation. Keeping your eyes closed, take some time to vividly imagine this hypothetical situation, the negative thoughts going through your head, and the anger and hostility you may feel towards your friend. (Let them do this for 1-2 minutes).

(Perpetrator perspective): First, let's imagine a hypothetical situation in which you hurt someone close to you and the thoughts and emotions associated with this transgression. Please close your eyes and imagine that you are studying for a very important exam in a class that is required for you to graduate. This exam is so important that if you do not do well on it you may not pass the class (or get a desirable grade in the class). As you are studying for this exam, you find out that one of your closest friends knows that you violated their trust by sharing confidential information your friend specifically asked you not to share. As a result, you feel guilty and ashamed about what you did. Your friend is angry and resentful toward you, and you feel very bad about violating their trust. Take a moment to think about how upset you would be in this situation. Think about how your actions of betraying your friends trust might occupy your mind during a time when you should really be concentrating on studying for your exam, not worrying about what to do about the situation. Keeping your eyes closed, take some time to vividly imagine this hypothetical situation, the negative thoughts going through your head, and the guilt you may feel about hurting your friend. (Let them do this for 1-2 minutes).

(Everyone): Now with these thoughts and negative emotions in mind, please assume a comfortable sitting position with your back straight against the back of your chair, your legs uncrossed, feet flat on the floor, hands in your lap, your shoulders dropped, and eyes closed. Allow your body to become still and bring your attention to the fact that you are breathing. Try not to manipulate your breath in any way or try to change it. Simply be aware of it and of the feelings associated with breathing. Being totally here in each moment with each breath. Do not try to do anything, or to get any place, simply be with your breath. Become aware of the movement of your breath as it comes into your body and as it leaves your body. Bring your attention to your belly, feeling it rise gently on the in-breath and fall on the out-breath.

You will find that from time to time your mind will wander off. Perhaps back to the thoughts of your friend. You might find yourself again worrying or being upset about what to do about this situation. When you notice that your attention is no longer here and no longer with

your breathing, without judging yourself, bring your attention back to your breathing and ride the waves of your breathing, being fully conscious of the duration of each breath from moment to moment. Regardless of the feelings that you have when contemplating what your friend did to you, just observe these feelings as simply a thought and let it be here without pursuing it or without rejecting it. Noticing that from moment to moment, new thoughts and feelings might come and go.

Every time you find your mind wandering off your breath and onto other thoughts, gently bring your awareness back to the present, back to the moment-to-moment observing of the flow of your breathing. Using your breath to help you tune into a state of relaxed awareness and stillness. If your mind wanders off a thousand times, your job is simply to bring it back to the breath every time, no matter what you become preoccupied with. (Let them do this practice for 2-3 minutes).

Now gradually bring your awareness back to the room. Continuing to concentrate on your breathing, slowly blink your eyes open. Sitting quietly, be aware of how it feels to spend time just being with your breath without having to do anything else.

Planning Script: Today you will be practicing the technique of planning. We will practice planning using a hypothetical scenario of someone hurting you (you hurting someone).

(Victim perspective): First, let's imagine a hypothetical situation in which someone close to you wrongs you and the thoughts and emotions associated with this transgression. Please close your eyes and imagine that you are studying for a very important exam in a class that is required for you to graduate. This exam is so important that if you do not do well on it you may not pass the class (or get a desirable grade in the class). As you are studying for this exam, you find out that one of your closest friends has violated your trust by sharing confidential information you specifically asked this friend not to share. As a result, you feel deeply hurt, betrayed, and angry towards your friend. You thought you could trust this person, so you feel resentful about what he/she did. Take a moment to think about how upset you would be in this situation. Think about how this person betraying your trust might occupy your mind during a time when you should really be concentrating on studying for your exam, not worrying about what to do about the situation. Keeping your eyes closed, take some time to vividly imagine this hypothetical situation, the negative thoughts going through your head, and the anger and hostility you may feel towards your friend. (Let them do this for 1-2 minutes). Please blink your eyes open.

(Perpetrator perspective): First, let's imagine a hypothetical situation in which you hurt someone close to you and the thoughts and emotions associated with this transgression. Please close your eyes and imagine that you are studying for a very important exam in a class that is required for you to graduate. This exam is so important that if you do not do well on it you may not pass the class (or get a desirable grade in the class). As you are studying for this exam, you find out that one of your closest friends knows that you violated their trust by sharing confidential information your friend specifically asked you not to share. As a result, you feel guilty and ashamed about what you did. Your friend is angry and resentful toward you, and you feel very bad about violating their trust. Take a moment to think about how upset you would be in this situation. Think about how your actions of betraying your friends trust might occupy your mind during a time when you should really be concentrating on studying for your exam, not worrying about what to do about the situation. Keeping your eyes closed, take some time to vividly imagine this hypothetical situation, the negative thoughts going through your head, and

the guilt you may feel about hurting your friend. (Let them do this for 1-2 minutes). Please blink your eyes open.

(Everyone): If there are situations (like the hypothetical transgression described) in which you know you should not be distracted by negative thoughts and feelings, creating specific, yet simple plans for things you can do or say to yourself to help prevent you from thinking about these negative emotions (when your attention should be focused elsewhere) can make it easier to concentrate on the task at hand.

Thus, with these thoughts and negative emotions in mind, please generate a personal plan that will help you to resist being distracted by your friend violating your trust (you violating your friend's trust). Use the following "if-then" statement as a guide when writing your plan. "If I start thinking about how upset I am about this situation when I am doing something that needs my full attention (like studying for an important exam), I will _____."

Please complete the sentence with your personal plan. Be sure to add as much detail as needed for your plan – the goal of creating a personal plan is to implement this plan should it be necessary. With repeated practice of your plan, you should not have to think about doing it. Instead, your planned response should become an automatic reaction in situations that require your full attention.

Message-Only Script: Today you will complete a series of questionnaires related to conflict within interpersonal relationships. In order to complete these questionnaires you will imagine a time when someone close to you hurt you/you hurt someone close to you. To help you imagine this situation, we will practice with a hypothetical scenario and then you will be asked to imagine a personal transgression.

(Victim perspective): First, let's imagine a hypothetical situation in which someone close to you wrongs you and the thoughts and emotions associated with this transgression. Please close your eyes and imagine that you are studying for a very important exam in a class that is required for you to graduate. This exam is so important that if you do not do well on it you may not pass the class (or get a desirable grade in the class). As you are studying for this exam, you find out that one of your closest friends has violated your trust by sharing confidential information you specifically asked this friend not to share. As a result, you feel deeply hurt, betrayed, and angry towards your friend. You thought you could trust this person, so you feel resentful about what he/she did. Take a moment to think about how upset you would be in this situation. Think about how this person betraying your trust might occupy your mind during a time when you should really be concentrating on studying for your exam, not worrying about what to do about the situation. Keeping your eyes closed, take some time to vividly imagine this hypothetical situation, the negative thoughts going through your head, and the anger and hostility you may feel towards your friend. Now take some time to think about why it might be important to release the negative emotions you may feel. (Let them do this for 1-2 minutes). Please blink your eyes open.

(Perpetrator perspective): First, let's imagine a hypothetical situation in which you hurt someone close to you and the thoughts and emotions associated with this transgression. Please close your eyes and imagine that you are studying for a very important exam in a class that is required for you to graduate. This exam is so important that if you do not do well on it you may not pass the class (or get a desirable grade in the class). As you are studying for this exam, you find out that one of your closest friends knows that you violated their trust by sharing confidential information your friend specifically asked you not to share. As a result, you feel

guilty and ashamed about what you did. Your friend is angry and resentful toward you, and you feel very bad about violating their trust. Take a moment to think about how upset you would be in this situation. Think about how your actions of betraying your friend's trust might occupy your mind during a time when you should really be concentrating on studying for your exam, not worrying about what to do about the situation. Keeping your eyes closed, take some time to vividly imagine this hypothetical situation, the negative thoughts going through your head, and the guilt you may feel about hurting your friend. Now take some time to think about why it might be important to release the negative emotions you may feel. (Let them do this for 1-2 minutes). Please blink your eyes open.

Control Condition Script: Today you will complete a series of questionnaires related to conflict within interpersonal relationships. In order to complete these questionnaires you will imagine a time when someone close to you hurt you/you hurt someone close to you. To help you imagine this situation, we will practice with a hypothetical scenario and then you will be asked to imagine a personal transgression.

(Victim perspective): First, let's imagine a hypothetical situation in which someone close to you wrongs you and the thoughts and emotions associated with this transgression. Please close your eyes and imagine that you are studying for a very important exam in a class that is required for you to graduate. This exam is so important that if you do not do well on it you may not pass the class (or get a desirable grade in the class). As you are studying for this exam, you find out that one of your closest friends has violated your trust by sharing confidential information you specifically asked this friend not to share. As a result, you feel deeply hurt, betrayed, and angry towards your friend. You thought you could trust this person, so you feel resentful about what he/she. Think about how this person betraying your trust might occupy your mind during a time when you should really be concentrating on studying for your exam, not worrying about what to do about the situation. Keeping your eyes closed, take some time to vividly imagine this hypothetical situation. (Let them do this for 1-2 minutes). Please blink your eyes open.

(Perpetrator perspective): First, let's imagine a hypothetical situation in which you hurt someone close to you and the thoughts and emotions associated with this transgression. Please close your eyes and imagine that you are studying for a very important exam in a class that is required for you to graduate. This exam is so important that if you do not do well on it you may not pass the class (or get a desirable grade in the class). As you are studying for this exam, you find out that one of your closest friends knows that you violated their trust by sharing confidential information your friend specifically asked you not to share. As a result, you feel guilty and ashamed about what you did. Your friend is angry and resentful toward you, and you feel very bad about violating their trust. Take a moment to think about how upset you would be in this situation. Think about how your actions of betraying your friend's trust might occupy your mind during a time when you should really be concentrating on studying for your exam, not worrying about what to do about the situation. Keeping your eyes closed, take some time to vividly imagine this hypothetical situation. (Let them do this for 1-2 minutes). Please blink your eyes open.

Appendix F - Study 1: Forgiveness Scale

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

Absence of negative thoughts, feelings, and behaviors:

1. I won't stop thinking about how I was wronged by (I wronged) this person (R)
2. I'll spend time thinking about ways to get back at the person who wronged me (I wronged) (R)
3. I'll feel resentful toward the person who wronged me (I wronged) (R)
4. I think that this person's wrongful actions (my wrongful actions) have kept me from enjoying life (R)
5. I'll let go of my anger toward the person who wronged me (I wronged) (R)
6. I'll become depressed when I think of how I was mistreated by this person (I mistreated this person) (R)
7. I'll feel hatred whenever I think about the person who wronged me (I wronged) (R)
8. I won't trust him/her (R)

Presence of positive thoughts, feelings, and behaviors:

1. I'll wish for good things to happen to the person who wronged me (I wronged)
2. I'll pray for the person who wronged me (I wronged)
3. If I encounter the person who wronged me (I wronged) I'll feel at peace
4. Many of the emotional wounds related to this person's wrongful actions (my wrongful actions) have healed
5. I'll have compassion for the person who wronged me (I wronged)
6. I'll think my life is ruined because of this person's (my) wrongful actions (R)
7. I'll hope the person who wronged me (I wronged) is treated fairly by others in the future.
8. I'll find it difficult to act warmly toward him/her. (R)

Appendix G - Study 1: Transgression-Related Interpersonal

Motivation Scale

1= Strongly Disagree

2 = Disagree

3 = Neutral

4 = Agree

5 = Strongly Agree

Avoidance behaviors:

1. I'll avoid certain people and/or places because they remind me of the person who wronged me (I wronged).
2. I'll avoid him/her.
3. I'll keep as much distance between us as possible.
4. I'll cut off the relationship with him/her.
5. I'll withdraw from the person who hurt me (I hurt)

Revenge-seeking behaviors:

1. I'll make him/her pay.
2. I wish that something bad would happen to him/her.
3. I want him/her to get what he/she deserves.
4. I'm going to get even.
5. I want to see him/her hurt and miserable.

Reconciliation attempts:

1. I'll try to make amends with the person I hurt
2. I'll take steps towards reconciliation with the person I hurt
3. I'll write an email/letter to the person who I hurt to try and reconcile
4. I'll call the person I hurt to try and reconcile
5. I'll express concern toward the person I hurt

Appendix H - Study 1: Attitudes toward Granting/Seeking

Forgiveness

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

Benefits of granting/seeking forgiveness:

1. I would feel better about myself if I forgave (asked for forgiveness)
2. I would feel peace if I forgave (asked for forgiveness)
3. I would feel a sense of relief if I forgave (asked for forgiveness)
4. I would feel happy if I forgave (asked for forgiveness)
5. Anger decreases when forgiveness takes place
6. Hostility and resentment decrease when forgiveness takes place
7. I believe that granting (seeking) forgiveness is a moral virtue
8. It is admirable to be a forgiving person (ask for forgiveness)

Costs of granting/seeking forgiveness:

1. Granting forgiveness (seeking forgiveness) is a sign of weakness
2. I would feel like I was getting less than I deserved if I forgave (asked for forgiveness)
3. I would feel weak if I forgave (asked for forgiveness)
4. I would feel less respect for myself afterwards if I forgave (asked for forgiveness)
5. I would lose power within the relationship if I forgave (asked for forgiveness)
6. I would be cheating myself if I forgave (asked for forgiveness)
7. I feel guilty if I do not forgive (asked for forgiveness)
8. Granting forgiveness (asking for forgiveness) can cause emotional problems like depression
9. Granting forgiveness (asking for forgiveness) can cause physical health problems like high blood pressure

Control beliefs for:

1. I feel in complete control over whether or not I forgive the person who hurt me (ask for forgiveness from the person I hurt)
2. It is up to me whether or not I forgive the person who hurt me (I ask for forgiveness from the person I hurt)
3. If I wanted to, I could easily forgive the person who hurt me (ask for forgiveness from the person I hurt)
4. I am confident that I can forgive the person who hurt me (ask for forgiveness from the person who I hurt)

Appendix I - Study 1: Mood

- 1 = very slightly or not at all
- 2 = a little
- 3 = moderately
- 4 = quite a bit
- 5 = extremely

General/overall mood:

- 1. Interested
- 2. Distressed
- 3. Excited
- 4. Upset
- 5. Strong
- 6. Guilty
- 7. Scared
- 8. Hostile
- 9. Enthusiastic
- 10. Proud
- 11. Irritable
- 12. Alert
- 13. Ashamed
- 14. Inspired
- 15. Nervous
- 16. Determined
- 17. Attentive
- 18. Jittery
- 19. Active
- 20. Afraid

- 1 = I feel very little of this emotion toward the other person
- 2 = A little of this emotion
- 3 = Neutral
- 4 = Some of this emotion
- 5 = I feel an extreme amount of this emotion toward the other person

Mood toward other person involved in transgression:

- 1. Pleased
- 2. Indebted
- 3. Happy
- 4. Obligated
- 5. Resentful
- 6. Mad
- 7. Annoyed
- 8. Hurt
- 9. Angry

10. Softhearted
11. Tender
12. Warm
13. Moved
14. Empathetic
15. Compassionate
16. Sympathetic

Appendix J - Study 1: Transgression Specific Items

Victims:

1. Please indicate the nature of your relationship with the person who wronged or mistreated you. [co-worker; distant family member (e.g., aunt, uncle, cousin, in-law); immediate family member (e.g., parents, siblings, grandparents, children); friend; roommate; romantic partner; other (specify)]
2. Please indicate the nature of the hurt, wrongdoing, or mistreatment by someone close to you. If the person close to you hurt you in multiple ways, then you may select more than one response. [abused you; betrayed you/violated your trust; criticized you; disappointed you; lied to you; rejected you; unfaithful/cheated on you; other (specify)]
3. Please rate the severity of hurt you experienced because you were wronged or mistreated by someone close to you (extremely hurtful; hurtful; moderately hurtful; slightly hurtful; not at all hurtful)
4. How long ago did the transgression occur? Please be as specific as possible (e.g., May 2015; three days ago; two weeks ago)
5. I have forgiven the person who hurt/wronged/mistreated you? Forgiveness meaning that you've released negative emotions (e.g., hostility, resentment, and anger) towards the person and/or reconciled/made amends with this person. (strongly disagree/strongly agree)
6. If you haven't forgiven this person, how interested are you in forgiving him/her? (not at all/extremely)

Perpetrator:

1. Please indicate the nature of your relationship with the person you wronged or mistreated. [co-worker; distant family member (e.g., aunt, uncle, cousin, in-law); immediate family member (e.g., parents, siblings, grandparents, children); friend; roommate; romantic partner; other (specify)]
2. Please indicate the nature of the hurt, wrongdoing, or mistreatment. If you hurt the person close to you in multiple ways, then you may select more than one response. [abused him/her; betrayed/violated his/her trust; criticized him/her; disappointed him/her; lied to him/her; rejected him/her; unfaithful/cheated on him/her; other (specify)]
3. Please rate the severity of the hurt/wrongdoing that you perpetrated (extremely hurtful; hurtful; moderately hurtful; slightly hurtful; not at all hurtful)
4. How long ago did the transgression occur? Please be as specific as possible (e.g., May 2015; three days ago; two weeks ago)
5. I have asked for the forgiveness of the person who I hurt/wronged/mistreated? Seeking forgiveness meaning that you've apologized and/or tried to make amends with the person you hurt. (strongly disagree/strongly agree)
6. If you have not asked for forgiveness from this person, how interested are you in seeking forgiveness from him/her? (not at all/extremely)

Appendix K - Demographic Information

1. Please indicate your age (free response)
2. Please indicate your gender (Male/Female/Other)
3. Please indicate your race/ethnicity (Black/African-American; White/Caucasian; Hispanic/Latino(a); Asian; Bi-racial; Other)
4. Please indicate your classification by credit hour (first-year of college; sophomore; junior; senior)

Appendix L - Study 2: SONA Recruitment Information

You will complete a distribution of resources task in which you and another participant will be asked to distribute 10 raffle tickets in a series of three distribution rounds. **THESE TICKETS WILL BE GOOD FOR ENTRY INTO A RAFFLE FOR A \$100 GIFT-CARD.** The main purpose of this study is learn more about how young adults regulate their emotions following situations that are frustrating and/or upsetting. As such, you will complete survey measures related to your experiences while completing the distribution of resources task.

This study will occur in a laboratory context and will last for approximately one hour. Participants completing this study will receive one in-lab, research credit.

Appendix M - Study 2: Emotion Regulation Message

Conflict within interpersonal relationships is often unavoidable, so it is very common for us to experience situations in which we feel frustrated/upset by something that someone else does to us. It is also very common for us to experience situations in which we (intentionally or unintentionally) make someone else feel frustrated/upset.

Regardless of if you are the person who was hurt OR you are the person who hurt someone else, similar negative consequences can occur if your emotions are not regulated properly. For example, when we hurt someone OR someone else hurts us, it is natural to potentially feel angry, frustrated, hurt, guilty, anxious, embarrassed, etc. It is also very common to over-think why we feel these emotions.

Although it is natural to feel this way initially, most religious, ethical, and social systems indicate that letting go of/regulating these negative emotions is the right thing to do. We are taught from a young age that carrying negative emotions, such as resentment, anger, and/or guilt is wrong.

Research also tells us that over-thinking the situation and harboring negative emotions (i.e., not regulating our emotions appropriately) can be bad for mental and physical health. For example, harboring negative emotions has been linked to depression and cardiovascular disease.

Not regulating your emotions can also hurt daily productivity. Imagine if you are preparing for a very important exam and you feel angry, frustrated, guilty, and/or anxious because of something you or someone else did – you may be distracted from studying for the exam, because you are thinking about the situation and how you feel.

Given the consequences of not regulating your emotions, it is important to learn how to release negative emotions and thoughts associated with feeling frustrated, upset, angry, guilty, embarrassed, etc., especially when you are in a situation that requires your full attention (e.g., like when you are studying/preparing for an important exam).

Appendix N - Study 2: Distribution of Resources Task Instructions

For this study, you will complete a distribution of resources task. You will be completing this task with a randomly assigned partner within the group; however, you will not know who your partner is for the task. You and your partner will complete three resource distribution rounds. During each round, ten raffle tickets will be distributed; these raffle tickets will be good for a drawing for a \$100 gift-card. For each distribution round, the tickets will be distributed either:

1. By chance (tickets will be distributed randomly)
2. By your partner (your partner will have the opportunity to decide how the tickets are distributed between you and him/her)
3. Or by you (you will have the opportunity to decide how the tickets are distributed between you and your partner)

Before each round you will be notified who the distribution agent will be. The researcher will give you a closed envelope to let you know who the distribution agent will be. During each distribution round, you may communicate with your partner (via a pen/pencil note) in between distribution rounds if you want (this is not required however). Once the distribution has been completed (either by chance, by your partner, or by you) the researcher will give you another envelope with the amount of tickets you received for that round. **REMEMBER, THESE TICKETS ARE GOOD FOR ENTRY INTO A RAFFLE FOR A \$100 GIFT-CARD TO THE STORE OF YOUR CHOICE.**

If you win the gift-card, which store would you like the gift-card to go towards?

Please write down your email address so we can contact you if you win the raffle (remember that your name and email address will NOT be associated in any way with your answers to the questionnaires and the distribution decisions).

Name: _____

Email: _____

Appendix O - Study 2: Mindfulness Training

Round 1: Today you will be practicing the technique of mindfulness. While practicing mindfulness please allow yourself to switch from the usual mode of doing to a mode of non-doing, of simply being.

First, let's imagine a situation in which you have had difficulty regulating your emotions. Close your eyes and try to imagine a situation in which you felt negative emotions, such as anger, frustration, guilt, anxiety, confusion, etc. The negative emotions you imagine will depend on the situation you recall, however, it is important that you think about a time where you had difficulty managing your emotions. Take a moment to visualize how you would feel given this situation. (Let them do this for 1-2 minutes).

Now with these thoughts and negative emotions in mind, please assume a comfortable sitting position with your back straight against the back of your chair, your legs uncrossed, feet flat on the floor, hands in your lap, your shoulders dropped, and eyes still closed. Allow your body to become still and bring your attention to the fact that you are breathing. Try not to manipulate your breath in any way or try to change it. Simply be aware of it and of the feelings associated with breathing. Being totally here in each moment with each breath. Do not try to do anything, or to get any place, simply be with your breath. Become aware of the movement of your breath as it comes into your body and as it leaves your body. Bring your attention to your belly, feeling it rise gently on the in-breath and fall on the out-breath.

You will find that from time to time your mind will wander off. Perhaps back to the thoughts of the emotions you imagined. When you notice that your attention is no longer here and no longer with your breathing, without judging yourself, bring your attention back to your breathing and ride the waves of your breathing, being fully conscious of the duration of each breath from moment to moment. Regardless of the feelings that you have, just observe these feelings as simply a thought and let it be here without pursuing it or without rejecting it. Noticing that from moment to moment, new thoughts and feelings might come and go.

Every time you find your mind wandering off your breath and onto other thoughts, gently bring your awareness back to the present, back to the moment-to-moment observing of the flow of your breathing. Using your breath to help you tune into a state of relaxed awareness and stillness. If your mind wanders off a thousand times, your job is simply to bring it back to the breath every time, no matter what you become preoccupied with. (Let them do this practice for ~3 minutes).

Now gradually bring your awareness back to the room. Continuing to concentrate on your breathing, slowly blink your eyes open. Sitting quietly, be aware of how it feels to spend time just being with your breath without having to do anything else. (The entire exercise should take ~ 5-minutes).

Round 2: We will practice the mindfulness technique again; however, now you will use this technique as you imagine your face-to-face interaction with your partner in round three of the distribution task.

Close your eyes and imagine what it will be like to interact with your partner during the third round. Think about what you will be feeling. You might feel frustrated/angry/upset or even anxious about interacting with your partner. Your partner might feel this way too (frustrated, angry, upset, anxious, etc.) (Let them do this for 1-2 minutes).

Now with these thoughts in mind, please assume a comfortable sitting position with your back straight against the back of your chair, your legs uncrossed, feet flat on the floor, hands in your lap, your shoulders dropped, and eyes still closed. Allow your body to become still and bring your attention to the fact that you are breathing. Try not to manipulate your breath in any way or try to change it. Simply be aware of it and of the feelings associated with breathing. Being totally here in each moment with each breath. Do not try to do anything, or to get any place, simply be with your breath. Become aware of the movement of your breath as it comes into your body and as it leaves your body. Bring your attention to your belly, feeling it rise gently on the in-breath and fall on the out-breath.

You will find that from time to time your mind will wander off. Perhaps back to the thoughts of you interacting with your partner. When you notice that your attention is no longer here and no longer with your breathing, without judging yourself, bring your attention back to your breathing and ride the waves of your breathing, being fully conscious of the duration of each breath from moment to moment. Regardless of the feelings that you have when contemplating your interaction with your partner, just observe these feelings as simply a thought and let it be here without pursuing it or without rejecting it. Noticing that from moment to moment, new thoughts and feelings might come and go.

Every time you find your mind wandering off your breath and onto other thoughts, gently bring your awareness back to the present, back to the moment-to-moment observing of the flow of your breathing. Using your breath to help you tune into a state of relaxed awareness and stillness. If your mind wanders off a thousand times, your job is simply to bring it back to the breath every time, no matter what you become preoccupied with. (Let them do this practice for ~3 minutes).

Now gradually bring your awareness back to the room. Continuing to concentrate on your breathing, slowly blink your eyes open. Sitting quietly, be aware of how it feels to spend time just being with your breath without having to do anything else. (The entire exercise should take ~5-minutes).

Appendix P - Study 2: Implementation Planning Training

Round 1: Today you will be practicing the technique of planning. Please close your eyes. First, let's imagine a situation in which you have had difficulty regulating your emotions. Close your eyes and try to imagine a situation in which you felt negative emotions, such as anger, frustration, guilt, anxiety, confusion, etc. The negative emotions you imagine will depend on the situation you recall, however, it is important that you think about a time where you had difficulty managing your emotions. Take a moment to visualize how you would feel given this situation. (Let them do this for 1-2 minutes). Please blink your eyes open.

Sometimes we might experience a situation in which we have trouble regulating our emotions, and we might think about what to do about this situation. If you're faced with a situation like this, creating specific, yet simple plans may help you to regulate the emotions you feel. These plans might take the form of "if-then" statements. For example, "If I start thinking about how upset/frustrated/guilty/anxious I am about this situation, then I will _____."

With this in mind, please generate your own personal plan for what you would do in situations in which you are having trouble regulating your emotions. You may use the "if-then" statement above as a guide when writing your plan.

Please take time to complete your personal plan. Be sure to add as much detail as needed for your plan – the goal of creating a personal plan is to implement this plan should it be necessary. With repeated practice of your plan, you should not have to think about doing it. Instead, your planned response should become an automatic reaction. (Let them do this for ~3 minutes; the entire task should take ~5-minutes).

Round 2: We will practice the planning technique again; however, now you will use this technique as you imagine your face-to-face interaction with your partner in round three of the distribution task.

Close your eyes and imagine what it will be like to interact with your partner during the third round. Think about what you will be feeling. You might feel frustrated/angry/upset or even anxious about interacting with your partner. Your partner might feel this way too (frustrated, angry, upset, anxious, etc.) (Let them do this for 1-2 minutes). Please blink your eyes open.

Now with the face-to-face interaction in mind, create your specific (yet simple) "if-then" plans that will help you to regulate your emotions when you meet with your partner. For example, "If my partner does _____, then I will _____."

Please take time to complete your personal plan. Be sure to add as much detail as needed for your plan – the goal of creating a personal plan is to implement this plan should it be necessary when you interact with your partner. (Let them do this for ~3 minutes; the entire task should take ~5-minutes).

Appendix Q - Study 2: Message-Only and Control Training

Round 1: Now we are going to recall a situation in which you have had difficulty regulating your emotions. Close your eyes and try to imagine a situation in which you felt negative emotions, such as anger, frustration, guilt, anxiety, confusion, etc. The negative emotions you imagine will depend on the situation you recall, however, it is important that you think about a time where you had difficulty managing your emotions. Take a moment to visualize how you would feel given this situation. (Let them do this for 1-2 minutes). Please blink your eyes open.

Now, please sit quietly while the researcher prepares for the next part of the study. (Sit quietly for ~3 minutes; the entire task should take ~5-minutes).

Round 2: Now we are going to imagine what it will be like to interact with your partner during the third distribution round.

Close your eyes and imagine what it will be like to interact face-to-face with your partner. Think about what you will be feeling. You might feel frustrated/angry/upset or even anxious about interacting with your partner. Your partner might feel this way too (frustrated, angry, upset, anxious, etc.) (Let them do this for 1-2 minutes). Please blink your eyes open.

Now, please sit quietly while the researcher prepares for the next part of the study. (Sit quietly for ~3 minutes; the entire task should take ~5-minutes).

Appendix R - Study 2: Attitudes about Granting/Seeking

Forgiveness

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

Benefits of granting/seeking forgiveness:

1. I would feel better about myself if I forgave (asked for forgiveness)
2. I would feel peace if I forgave (asked for forgiveness)
3. I would feel a sense of relief if I forgave (asked for forgiveness)
4. I would feel happy if I forgave (asked for forgiveness)
5. Anger decreases when forgiveness takes place
6. Hostility and resentment decrease when forgiveness takes place
7. I believe that granting (seeking) forgiveness is a moral virtue
8. It is admirable to be a forgiving person (ask for forgiveness)

Costs of granting/seeking forgiveness:

1. Granting forgiveness (seeking forgiveness) is a sign of weakness
2. I would feel like I was getting less than I deserved if I forgave (asked for forgiveness)
3. I would feel weak if I forgave (asked for forgiveness)
4. I would feel less respect for myself afterwards if I forgave (asked for forgiveness)
5. I would lose power within the relationship if I forgave (asked for forgiveness)
6. I would be cheating myself if I forgave (asked for forgiveness)
7. I feel guilty if I do not forgive (asked for forgiveness)
8. Granting forgiveness (asking for forgiveness) can cause emotional problems like depression
9. Granting forgiveness (asking for forgiveness) can cause physical health problems like high blood pressure

Control beliefs:

1. I feel in complete control over whether or not I forgive people who hurt me (ask for forgiveness from people I hurt)
2. It is up to me whether or not I forgive people who hurt me (I ask for forgiveness from the people I hurt)
3. If I wanted to, I could easily forgive the people who hurt me (ask for forgiveness from the people I hurt)
4. I am confident that I can forgive the people who hurt me (ask for forgiveness from the people who I hurt)

Appendix S - Study 2: Mood

- 1 = very slightly or not at all
- 2 = a little
- 3 = moderately
- 4 = quite a bit
- 5 = extremely

General/overall mood:

- 1. Interested
- 2. Distressed
- 3. Excited
- 4. Upset
- 5. Strong
- 6. Guilty
- 7. Scared
- 8. Hostile
- 9. Enthusiastic
- 10. Proud
- 11. Irritable
- 12. Alert
- 13. Ashamed
- 14. Inspired
- 15. Nervous
- 16. Determined
- 17. Attentive
- 18. Jittery
- 19. Active
- 20. Afraid

- 1 = I feel very little of this emotion toward the other person
- 2 = A little of this emotion
- 3 = Neutral
- 4 = Some of this emotion
- 5 = I feel an extreme amount of this emotion toward the other person

Mood toward partner:

- 1. Pleased
- 2. Indebted
- 3. Happy
- 4. Obligated
- 5. Resentful
- 6. Mad
- 7. Annoyed
- 8. Hurt
- 9. Angry

10. Softhearted
11. Tender
12. Warm
13. Moved
14. Empathetic
15. Compassionate
16. Sympathetic

Appendix T - Study 2: Self-Report Forgiveness Granting/Seeking

Behaviors

- 1 = Very untrue of me
- 2 = Untrue of me
- 3 = Somewhat untrue of me
- 4 = Neutral
- 5 = Somewhat true
- 6 = True of me
- 7 = Very true of me
- NA = not applicable

I decided to distribute the raffle tickets the way I did because _____.

1. I wanted to get as many tickets as I could in order to win the gift-card.
2. I wanted to be fair to the other participant.
3. I wanted to help the other participant.
4. I wanted to express forgiveness toward the other participant.
5. I wanted to establish justice.
6. I wanted payback for an earlier distribution.
7. I wanted to act morally.
8. I wanted to teach the other participant a lesson.
9. I wanted to even things up.

- 1 = Very untrue of me
- 2 = Untrue of me
- 3 = Somewhat untrue of me
- 4 = Neutral
- 5 = Somewhat true
- 6 = True of me
- 7 = Very true of me

I would _____ if I got to interact with my partner during round 3.

1. apologize about my distribution decision.
2. explain my distribution decision.
3. justify why I distributed the tickets the way I did.
4. take responsibility for my distribution decision.
5. try to make amends with my partner.
6. express concern if I upset/frustrated my partner.

Appendix U - Study 2: Debriefing Form

Thank you for participating in this study! The purpose of the present study was to examine how training techniques (mindfulness and planning techniques) impact decisions to grant or seek forgiveness.

You were informed at the beginning of the study that you would be completing the distribution of resources task with another participant. However, in this study, you were not interacting with another person in the group. Deception in this study was necessary. The reasons for this deception are two-fold:

1. In order to measure behavioral forgiveness (i.e., your distribution decision to the other participant in round three of the task) (or seeking forgiveness, if you wrote a note to your partner in round three) we needed to create a situation in which a transgression took place.
2. Because we needed a transgression to occur, we told you that you were working with another person. However, if you were working with another person we would have no way of knowing for sure how the rounds would play out. As such, we needed you to think that you were interacting with another person in the group.

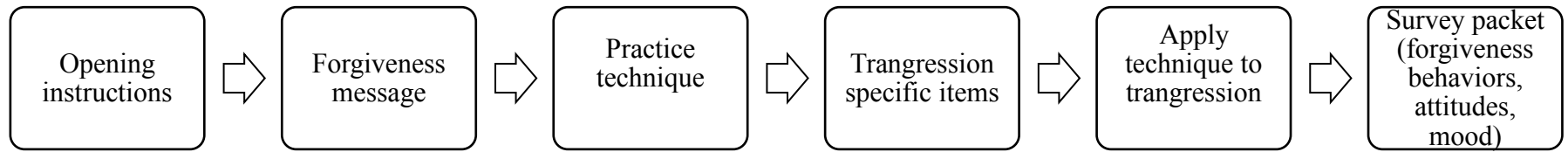
This research is very important for forgiveness literature. It should be understood that there were no “right” or “wrong” answers or distribution decisions that could have been provided. The purpose of this research was to get an honest and accurate account of behavioral granting/seeking forgiveness and your general outlook on life. In terms of the gift-card, we will put your name in a raffle along with the other participants who completed this study, so you actually have a better chance of winning the gift-card than you may have originally anticipated! **We appreciate the time you have taken to complete this study. Thank you for your participation.**

If you have any questions about this study or about psychological research in general, do not hesitate to contact Whitney Jeter, M.S. at wjeter@ksu.edu. If you have concerns of a more personal nature, you should feel free to contact a local counseling psychologist. If you live in the Manhattan, KS area, feel free to contact University Counseling Services at counsel@ksu.edu or (785-532-6927) or Pawnee Mental Health Services (785-587-4300).

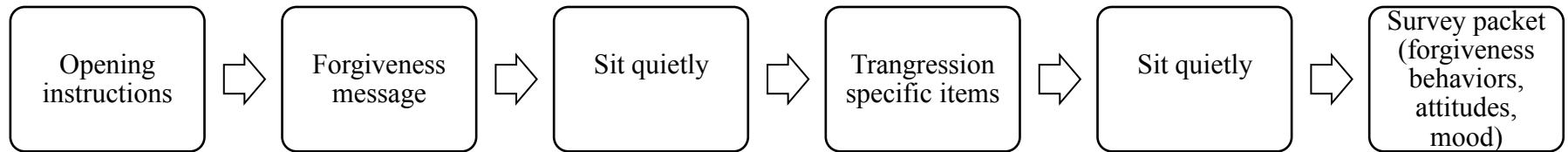
If you have any questions about the ethical content of this study, do not hesitate to contact Dr. Rick Scheidt, Chair of Committee Research Involving Human Subjects at 785-532-3224.

Again, thank you for your time!

Technique/Message Conditions



Message-only Condition



Control Condition

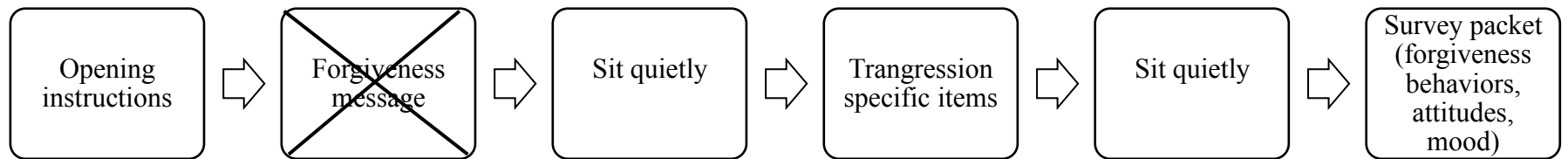
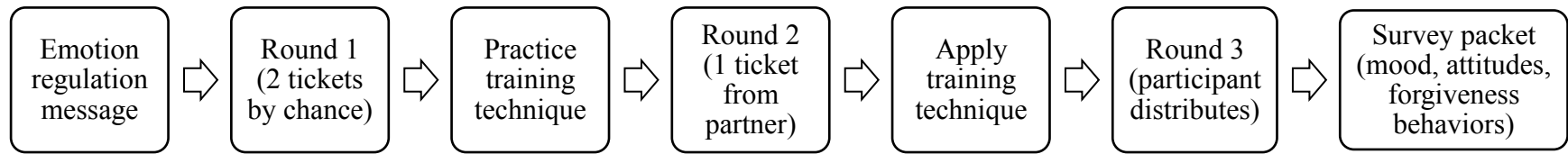
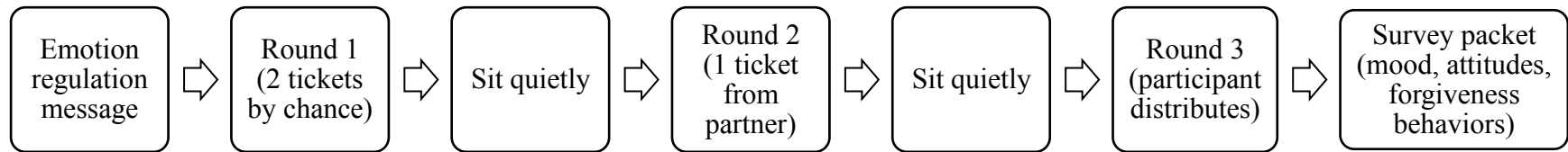


Figure 1. Study 1 procedural order for experimental conditions

Technique/Message Conditions



Message-Only Condition



Control-Condition

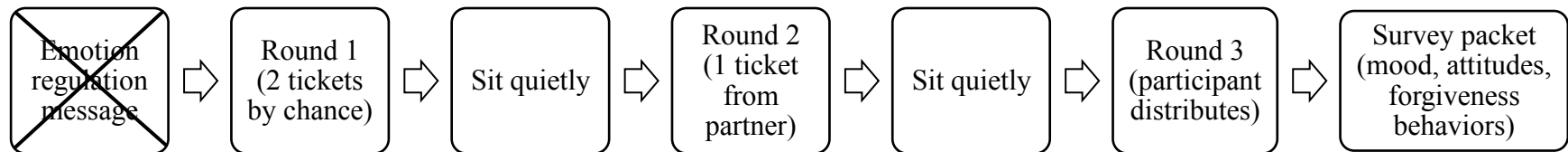
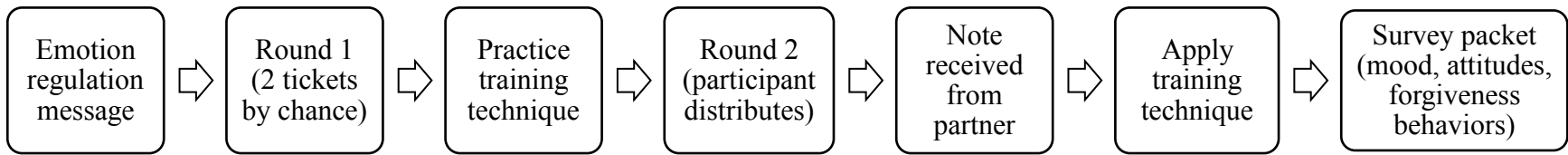
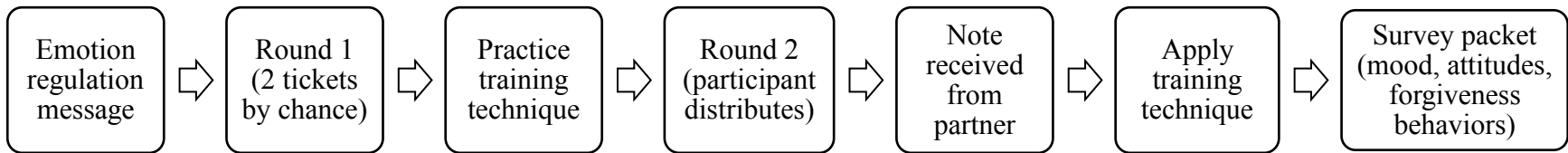


Figure 2. Study 2 procedural order for experimental conditions (victim perspective)

Technique/Message Conditions



Message-Only Condition



Control-Condition

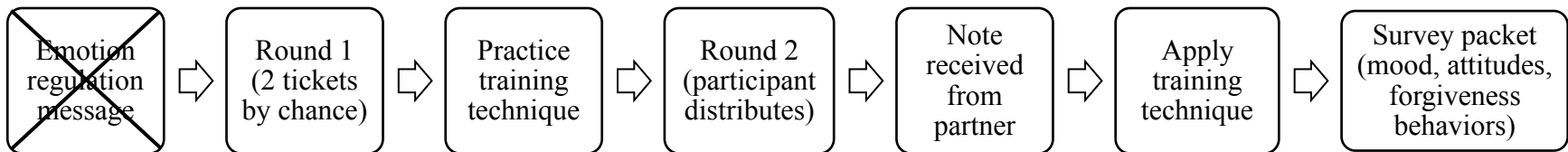


Figure 3. Study 2 procedural order for experimental conditions (perpetrator perspective)

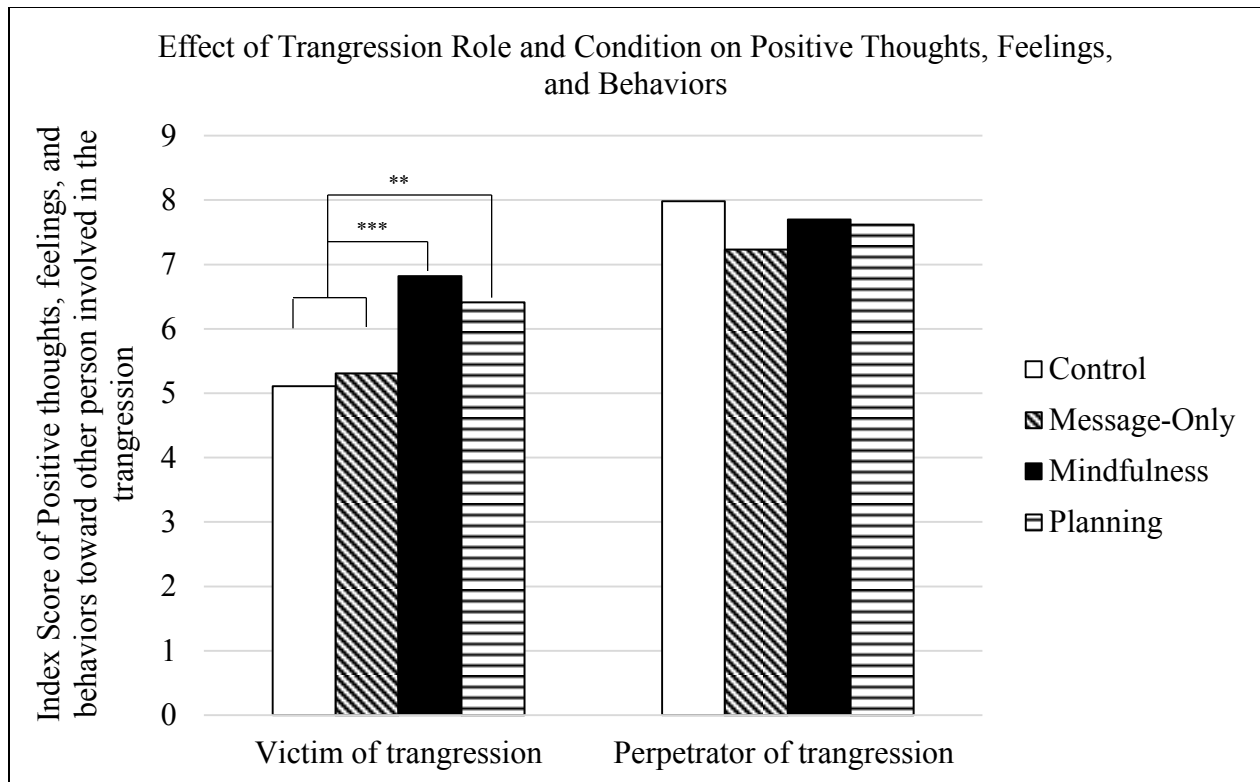


Figure 4. In study 1, we found that victims in the mindfulness and planning conditions reported significantly more positive thoughts, feelings, and behaviors (TFB) toward the other person involved in the transgression compared to the control and message-only conditions. However, there were no significant differences for perpetrators in the control, message-only, mindfulness, and planning conditions in terms of positive TFB.

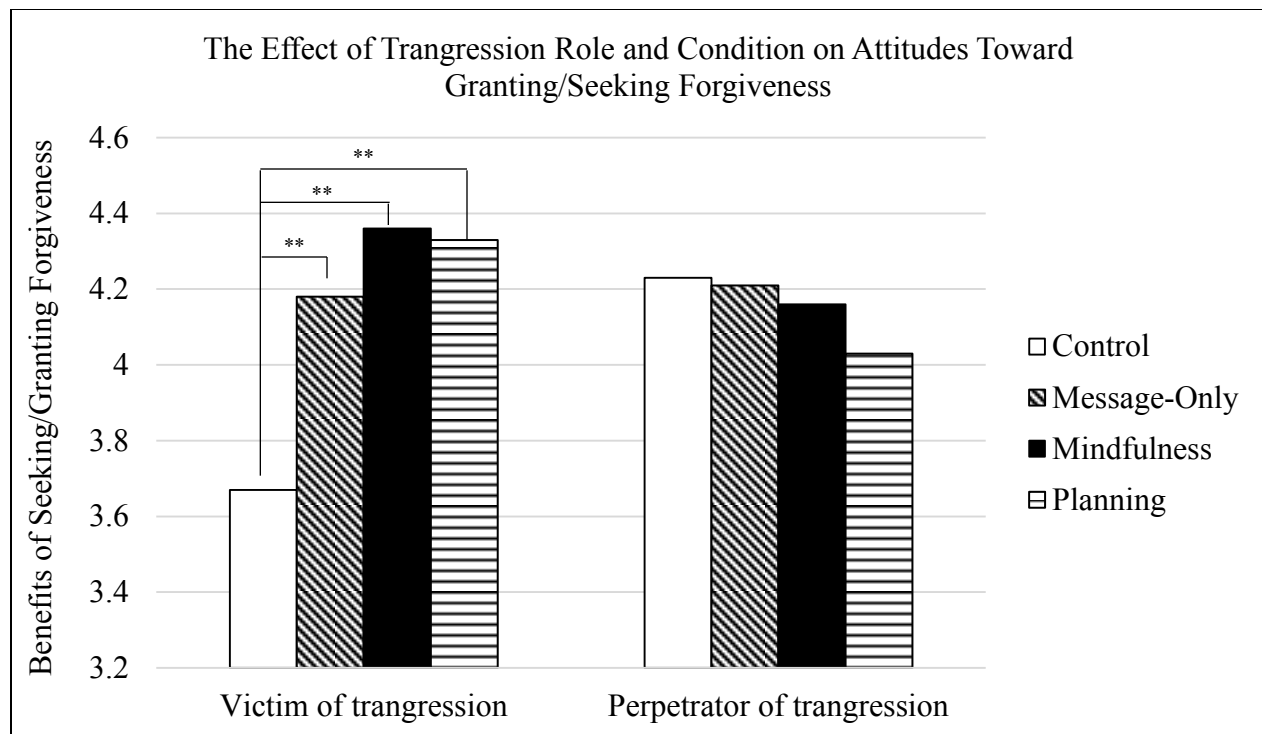


Figure 5. In Study 2, results suggest that victims in the control condition reported significantly fewer benefits of granting forgiveness compared to victims in the message-only, mindfulness, and planning conditions. For perpetrators, we did not find significant differences between the conditions regarding the benefits of seeking forgiveness.

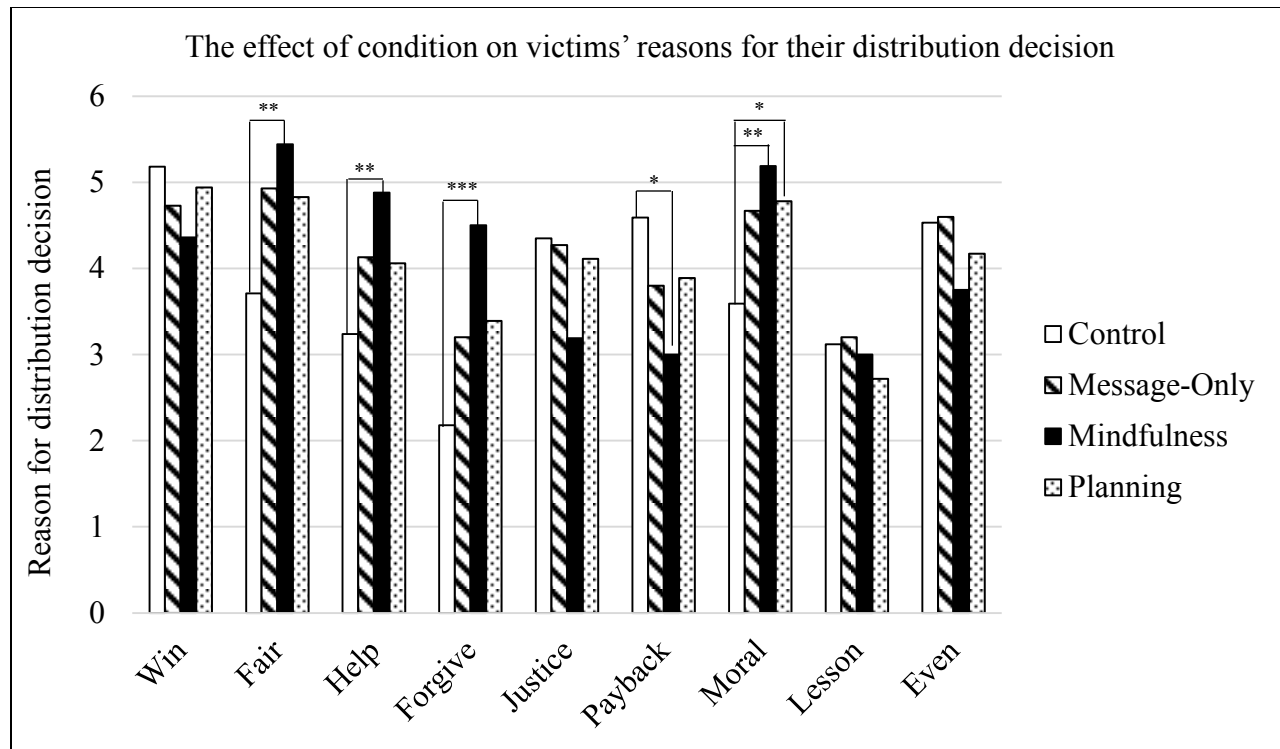


Figure 6. In Study 2, we found that participants in the mindfulness condition reported that their distribution decision during round three was based on wanting to be more fair to their partner, wanting to help their partner, wanting less payback, wanting to act more morally when distributing the tickets, and wanting to express more forgiveness than the participants in the control condition. Participants in the planning condition reported wanting to act more morally in their distribution decision than participants in the control condition. Win = “I wanted to get as many tickets as I could to win the gift-card;” Fair = “I wanted to be fair to the other participant;” Help = “I wanted to help the other participant;” Forgive = “I wanted to express forgiveness toward the other participant;” Justice = “I wanted to establish justice;” Payback = “I wanted payback for an earlier distribution;” Moral = “I wanted to act morally;” Lesson = “I wanted to teach the other participant a lesson;” Even = “I wanted to even things up.”

Table 1

Study 1 means and standard errors for the effect of transgression role (victim or perpetrator) and condition (control, message-only, mindfulness, and planning) on avoidance behaviors

	Victim of transgression	Perpetrator of transgression	Total (<i>n</i> = 144)
Control Condition			
<i>M (SE)</i>	4.29 (.24)	2.90 (.24)	3.60^a (.17)
<i>n</i>	17	17	
Message-Only Condition			
<i>M (SE)</i>	3.44(.24)	2.58 (.24)	3.01^{ab} (.17)
<i>n</i>	18	17	
Mindfulness Condition			
<i>M (SE)</i>	3.00 (.24)	2.16 (.23)	2.58^b (.17)
<i>n</i>	17	19	
Planning Condition			
<i>M (SE)</i>	3.15 (.22)	2.46 (.24)	2.80^{ab} (.16)
<i>n</i>	21	18	
Total			
<i>M (SE)</i>	3.47^a (.12)	2.52^b (.12)	
<i>n</i>	73	71	

Note: Values in parentheses are standard errors. Number under mean is the number of participants in each cell. Means in columns with different subscripts significantly differ from one another. Avoidance behaviors were measured on a five point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree, 5 = strongly agree).

Table 2

Study 1 means and standard errors for the effect of transgression role (victim or perpetrator) and condition (control, message-only, mindfulness, and planning) on attitudes toward the benefits of granting/seeking forgiveness

	Victim of transgression	Perpetrator of transgression	Total (<i>n</i> = 144)
Control Condition			
<i>M</i> (<i>SE</i>)	3.15 (.19)	3.72 (.19)	3.44^a (.14)
<i>n</i>	17	17	
Message-Only Condition			
<i>M</i> (<i>SE</i>)	3.19 (.19)	3.66 (.19)	3.43^a (.13)
<i>n</i>	18	17	
Mindfulness Condition			
<i>M</i> (<i>SE</i>)	3.88 (.17)	3.82 (.18)	3.85^b (.13)
<i>n</i>	17	19	
Planning Condition			
<i>M</i> (<i>SE</i>)	3.56 (.17)	3.85 (.19)	3.71^{ab} (.13)
<i>n</i>	21	18	
Total			
<i>M</i> (<i>SE</i>)	3.45^a (.09)	3.77^b (.09)	
<i>n</i>	73	71	

Note: Values in parentheses are standard errors. Number under mean is the number of participants in each cell. Means in columns with different subscripts significantly differ from one another. Benefits of forgiveness were measured on a five point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree, 5 = strongly agree).

Table 3

Study 1 means and standard errors for the effect of transgression role (victim or perpetrator) and condition (control, message-only, mindfulness, and planning) on attitudes towards the costs of granting/seeking forgiveness

	Victim of transgression	Perpetrator of transgression	Total (<i>n</i> = 144)
Control Condition			
<i>M</i> (<i>SE</i>)	2.66 (.15)	1.79 (.15)	2.23^a (.11)
<i>n</i>	17	17	
Message-Only Condition			
<i>M</i> (<i>SE</i>)	2.65 (.15)	2.29 (.15)	2.47^a (.11)
<i>n</i>	18	17	
Mindfulness Condition			
<i>M</i> (<i>SE</i>)	2.10 (.15)	1.78 (.14)	1.94^b (.10)
<i>n</i>	17	19	
Planning Condition			
<i>M</i> (<i>SE</i>)	2.33 (.14)	2.12 (.15)	2.23^a (.10)
<i>n</i>	21	18	
Total			
<i>M</i> (<i>SE</i>)	2.44^a (.07)	1.99^b (.07)	
<i>n</i>	73	71	

Note: Values in parentheses are standard errors. Number under mean is the number of participants in each cell. Means in columns with different subscripts significantly differ from one another. Costs of forgiveness were measured on a five point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree, 5 = strongly agree).

Table 4

Study 1 means and standard errors for the effect of transgression role (victim or perpetrator) and condition (control, message-only, mindfulness, and planning) on control beliefs

	Victim of transgression	Perpetrator of transgression	Total (<i>n</i> = 144)
Control Condition			
<i>M (SE)</i>	4.65 (.21)	4.16 (.21)	4.40 (.15)
<i>n</i>	17	17	
Message-Only Condition			
<i>M (SE)</i>	4.28 (.20)	3.96 (.21)	4.12 (.14)
<i>n</i>	18	17	
Mindfulness Condition			
<i>M (SE)</i>	4.35 (.21)	4.29 (.19)	4.32 (.14)
<i>n</i>	17	19	
Planning Condition			
<i>M (SE)</i>	4.21 (.19)	3.86 (.20)	4.04 (.14)
<i>n</i>	21	18	
Total			
<i>M (SE)</i>	4.37^a (.10)	4.07^b (.10)	
<i>n</i>	73	71	

Note: Values in parentheses are standard errors. Number under mean is the number of participants in each cell. Means in columns with different subscripts significantly differ from one another. Control beliefs were measured on a five point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree, 5 = strongly agree).

Table 5

Study 1 means and standard errors for the effect of transgression role (victim or perpetrator) and condition (control, message-only, mindfulness, and planning) on positive general mood

	Victim of transgression	Perpetrator of transgression	Total (n = 144)
Control Condition			
<i>M (SE)</i>	-.14 (.26)	-.01 (.26)	-.07^a (.18)
<i>n</i>	17	17	
Message-Only Condition			
<i>M (SE)</i>	-.01 (.25)	-.22 (.26)	-.12^a (.18)
<i>n</i>	18	17	
Mindfulness Condition			
<i>M (SE)</i>	1.18 (.26)	1.25 (.25)	1.22^b (.18)
<i>n</i>	17	19	
Planning Condition			
<i>M (SE)</i>	.86 (.23)	.19 (.25)	.52^c (.17)
<i>n</i>	21	18	
Total			
<i>M (SE)</i>	.47 (.13)	.30 (.13)	
<i>n</i>	73	71	

Note: Values in parentheses are standard errors. Number under mean is the number of participants in each cell. Means in columns with different subscripts significantly differ from one another. Positive and negative general mood were measured on a five point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree, 5 = strongly agree). An index score was created by taking the difference of positive and negative general mood (positive mood – negative mood).

Table 6

Study 1 means and standard errors for the effect of transgression role (victim or perpetrator) and condition (control, message-only, mindfulness, and planning) on positive mood toward the other person involved in the transgression

	Victim of transgression	Perpetrator of transgression	Total (<i>n</i> = 144)
Control Condition			
<i>M (SE)</i>	- .83 (.33)	.29 (.33)	-.27 (.24)
<i>n</i>	17	17	
Message-Only Condition			
<i>M (SE)</i>	-1.12 (.32)	-.06 (.33)	-.59 (.23)
<i>n</i>	18	17	
Mindfulness Condition			
<i>M (SE)</i>	-.50 (.33)	.60 (.31)	.05 (.23)
<i>n</i>	17	19	
Planning Condition			
<i>M (SE)</i>	-1.25 (.30)	.76 (.32)	-.24 (.22)
<i>n</i>	21	18	
Total			
<i>M (SE)</i>	-.92^a (.16)	.40^b (.16)	
<i>n</i>	73	71	

Note: Values in parentheses are standard errors. Number under mean is the number of participants in each cell. Means in columns with different subscripts significantly differ from one another. Positive and negative mood toward the other person involved in the transgression were measured on a five point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree, 5 = strongly agree). An index score was created by taking the difference of positive and negative mood toward the other person (positive mood – negative mood).

Table 7

Study 2 means and standard errors for the effect of transgression role (victim or perpetrator) and condition (control, message-only, mindfulness, and planning) on positive general mood

	Victim of transgression	Perpetrator of transgression	Total (n = 147)
Control Condition			
<i>M (SE)</i>	.26 (.23)	.41 (.22)	.33^a (.16)
<i>n</i>	20	18	
Message-Only Condition			
<i>M (SE)</i>	.86 (.24)	.68 (.25)	.77^{ab} (.17)
<i>n</i>	17	18	
Mindfulness Condition			
<i>M (SE)</i>	.94 (.22)	1.06 (.26)	1.00^b (.17)
<i>n</i>	18	19	
Planning Condition			
<i>M (SE)</i>	.80 (.23)	.85 (.23)	.82^b (.16)
<i>n</i>	20	17	
Total			
<i>M (SE)</i>	.72 (.11)	.75 (.12)	
<i>n</i>	75	72	

Note: Values in parentheses are standard errors. Number under mean is the number of participants in each cell. Means in columns with different subscripts significantly differ from one another. Positive and negative general mood were measured on a five point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree, 5 = strongly agree). An index score was created by taking the difference of positive and negative general mood (positive mood – negative mood).

Table 8

Study 2 means and standard errors for the effect of transgression role (victim or perpetrator) and condition (control, message-only, mindfulness, and planning) on positive mood toward partner

	Victim of transgression	Perpetrator of transgression	Total (<i>n</i> = 147)
Control Condition			
<i>M (SE)</i>	-.93 (.26)	.52 (.25)	-.21 (.18)
<i>n</i>	20	18	
Message-Only Condition			
<i>M (SE)</i>	-.73 (.28)	.23 (.29)	-.25 (.20)
<i>n</i>	17	18	
Mindfulness Condition			
<i>M (SE)</i>	-.06 (.26)	.45 (.27)	.20 (.19)
<i>n</i>	18	19	
Planning Condition			
<i>M (SE)</i>	-.72 (.25)	.28 (.30)	-.22 (.20)
<i>n</i>	20	17	
Total			
<i>M (SE)</i>	-.61^a (.13)	.37^b (.14)	
<i>n</i>	75	72	

Note: Values in parentheses are standard errors. Number under mean is the number of participants in each cell. Means in columns with different subscripts significantly differ from one another. Positive and negative mood toward the partner were measured on a five point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree, 5 = strongly agree). An index score was created by taking the difference of positive and negative mood toward the partner (positive mood – negative mood).

Table 9

Study 2 means and standard errors for the effect of condition (control, message-only, mindfulness, and planning) on perpetrators' responses to the potential interaction with partner

	Control (<i>n</i> = 18)	Message-only (<i>n</i> = 18)	Mindfulness (<i>n</i> = 19)	Planning (<i>n</i> = 17)	Total (<i>n</i> = 72)
<hr/>					
Apologize to partner					
<i>M (SE)</i>	4.78 (.50)	3.29 (.56)	3.06 (.53)	3.54 (.59)	3.67^a (.27)
Make amends					
<i>M (SE)</i>	5.56 (.41)	5.29 (.47)	4.38 (.44)	4.31 (.49)	4.88^b (.23)
Express concern					
<i>M (SE)</i>	5.33 (.38)	5.00 (.43)	4.75 (.40)	5.10 (.44)	5.04^b (.21)
Justify decision					
<i>M (SE)</i>	5.83 (.27)	5.93 (.31)	6.13 (.29)	5.77 (.32)	5.91^{bc} (.15)
Explain decision					
<i>M (SE)</i>	5.89 (.30)	6.00 (.34)	5.75 (.32)	6.23 (.35)	5.98^{bcd} (.16)
Take responsibility					
<i>M (SE)</i>	6.11 (.22)	6.14 (.25)	6.13 (.24)	6.54 (.26)	6.23^{bcd} (.12)

Total

M (SE) **5.58 (.23)** **5.27 (.27)** **5.03 (.28)** **5.24 (.25)**

Note: Values in parentheses are standard errors. *n* =the number of participants in each cell. Means in columns with different subscripts significantly differ from one another. Responses to potential interaction were measured on a seven point Likert scale (1 = very untrue of me, 7 = very true of me).