

The effects of intrapersonal-interpersonal forgiveness on negative affect, perceived control, and intention to terminate the relationship in victims of dating violence¹

Sung Yi Cha²

Myoung Ho Hyun³

Young Sun Ra

SunYoung Yoon

Chung-Ang University, South Korea

Abstract

This article identifies the role of forgiveness in psychological adaptation among victims of dating violence. The roles of intra- and interpersonal forgiveness in predicting changes in negative affect, perceived control, and the intention to remain in the relationship are examined. For this study, 43 women involved in a relationship characterized by dating violence were recruited. Participants were assigned to one of the following groups: intrapersonal forgiveness, interpersonal forgiveness, or waiting-list control. After participants recalled recent victimizing experiences, their initial levels of negative affect and forgiveness were measured. Then, participants listened to the instructions for either the intra- or interpersonal forgiveness condition. Finally, participants completed self-report measures assessing negative affect (PANAS), perceived control (AAQ), forgiveness (VAS), and intent to leave the abusive relationship. The analyses revealed that intra- and interpersonal forgiveness had differential effects on negative affect. Specifically, intrapersonal forgiveness was more effective at reducing negative affect than was interpersonal forgiveness. Additionally, both intra- and interpersonal forgiveness influenced current levels of perceived control; however, neither affected perceptions of past control or the participant's intention to leave the relationship.

Key words

Dating violence, Intrapersonal and interpersonal forgiveness, Negative affect, Perceived control

¹ This Research was supported by the Chung-Ang University Research Grants in 2010.

² First Author, thechas2@hanmail.net

³ Corresponding Author, hyunmh@cau.ac.kr

Introduction

Intimate-partner violence, including domestic violence and dating violence are major problems in modern society, and the rate of intimate-partner violence is significantly high. Additionally, it is well established that intimate-partner violence results in serious damage to the victim's psychological health in many ways, including lowered self-esteem and increased risk of posttraumatic stress disorder and depression (Aguilar & Nightingale, 1994; O'Leary, 1999; Pimlott-Kubiak & Cortina, 2003; Woods, 2000). Although there have been several studies on the harmful effects and the underlying mechanisms of the effects of intimate-partner violence, dating violence has been under-represented in the literature. Dating violence can be defined as psychological and/or physical abuse against a current dating partner, employed as a means of gaining control in the relationship (Ronfeldt, Kimerling, & Arias, 1998). The rate of dating violence has been reported to be roughly 20-33 percent (Smith, Tomaka, Thomson, & Buchanan, 2005). Additionally, it has been established that one of every three Korean women who has ever been in a romantic relationship has experienced either emotional or physical dating violence (Ahn, 2001; Suh, 2002, 2004; Suh & Ahn, 2007).

It has been demonstrated that high levels of attachment and commitment are associated with increased levels of control and abusive behaviors (Finkel, Rusbult, Kumashiro, & Hannon, 2002). Women in abusive relationships tend not to blame their partner for the abusive behavior, and they tend to display stronger levels of commitment than do those women in nonviolent relationships (Hanley & O'Neill, 1997; Mills & Malley-Morrison, 1998). Additionally, the strong commitment contributes to the processes underlying the abusive relationship (Rusbult, 1983; Rusbult & Martz, 1995). However, this level of commitment can directly influence the victim's intention to forgive the abuser (Finkel et al., 2002; Karremans & Aarts, 2007).

It has been reported that victims of domestic and dating violence often forgive their partner despite the exposure to severe and recurrent violence (Gordon, Burton, & Porter, 2004; Katz, Street, & Arias, 1997; Reed & Enright, 2006). Forgiving an abusive partner helps the victim to release negative feelings and to process the symptoms of post-traumatic stress (Reed & Enright, 2006). However, there is also the po-

tential that the abusive partner may interpret being forgiven as condoning or approving of the violence, which can result in recurrence of the violating behavior (Baumeister, Exline, & Sommer, 1998). Indeed, forgiving one's transgressor does not always protect the individual from further transgression (Wallace, Exline, & Baumeister, 2008).

Recently, it has been argued that forgiveness should be approached as a multidimensional phenomenon in order to more specifically examine the efficacy of this process (Worthington, 2005; Worthington & Wade, 1999; Worthington, Witvliet, Pietrini, & Miller, 2007). In order to divide forgiveness into sub-dimensions, several researchers have classified forgiveness into intrapersonal and interpersonal types (Baumeister et al., 1998; Worthington & Scherer, 2004; Worthington et al., 2007). Specifically, it has been proposed that intrapersonal forgiveness is a process which allows an individual to let go of and reduce anger, resentment, and other negative emotions and no longer hold grudge feelings toward the perpetrator and stop ruminating about transgression. The intrapersonal dimension focuses more on the victims' hurtful feelings and thought caused by transgression than empathy for the transgressor. Additionally, interpersonal forgiveness has been associated with one's efforts to restore an impaired relationship with the transgressor. In this regard, interpersonal forgiveness is closer to the traditional meaning of forgiveness which contains the willingness to reconcile with and show compassion for the transgressor. Intra- and interpersonal forgiveness can occur independently. Thus, a victim who has repaired the relationship with a transgressor may still experience anger, while a victim who harbors no negative feelings toward the transgressor may not wish to repair the relationship.

Two types of forgiveness may be distinguished from one another based on their effects. Specifically, granting forgiveness has been shown to be effective in increasing both psychological and physiological health through reductions of negative emotions and physiological stress (Freedman & Enright, 1996; Maltby, Macaskill, & Day, 2001; Witvliet, Ludwig, & van der Laan, 2001; Worthington & Scherer, 2004). This is especially true in the case of intrapersonal forgiveness, which has been related directly to reductions of negative emotions and stress responses (Lawler et al., 2005; Worthington et al., 2007). McCullough and Worthington (1995) have reported differential effects of two forgiveness-based interventions. Specifically, one of these interventions focused

on the physical and psychological benefits of forgiveness, while the other focused on increasing affirming attributions and conciliatory behaviors toward the offender.

In the case of victimization, the differences between intra- and interpersonal forgiveness are more distinct. In particular, Cardi, Milich, Harris and Kearns (2007) have shown that intrapersonal forgiveness is associated with reductions in the negative emotions of women who have experienced victimization, while interpersonal forgiveness was not associated with these types of reductions. Additionally, the conciliation element of forgiveness has been shown to be associated with higher levels of anxiety and disrupted relationships with maternal caregivers among women with a history of sexual abuse (Noll, 2003). After controlling for the associated effects of the intrapersonal dimension, the interpersonal dimension was not associated with increases in physical or psychological wellbeing (Scherbarth, 2007). These previous results raise the possibility that interpersonal forgiveness may not be appropriate in the case of interpersonal victimization, as it is less effective than intrapersonal forgiveness. Moreover, interpersonal forgiveness can even disturb the recovering process by influencing the victim to continue the abusive relationship. As interpersonal forgiveness includes intentions to reconcile and further pro-social behavior, it may be problematic for an ongoing abusive relationship. Maintaining an abusive relationship may result in increases in the intensity of violence over time (Cascardi & O'Leary, 1992; Walker, 1983).

Despite the physical and psychological damage caused by dating violence, roughly half of all victims maintain a relationship with the abusive partner (Cho, 2001; Jezl, Molider, & Wright, 1996; Roscoe & Benaske, 1985). The decision to terminate an abusive relationship is influenced by many variables, including external variables, and relational variables (Gondolf, 1988; Rusbult & Martz, 1995; Schutte, Malouff, & Doyle, 1988; Strube & Barbour, 1983), and psychological variables, such as self-esteem, self blame attribution and negative self appraisal (Cascardi & O'Leary, 1992; Schutte et al., 1988). Recently, research has indicated that forgiveness is a psychological variable which may contribute to the maintenance of an abusive relationship (Gordon et al., 2004; Katz et al., 1997). These results suggest that increases in pro-social emotions and thoughts about an abusive partner may contribute to the continuation

of an abusive relationship.

Therapists are also often concerned that forgiveness interventions are not only inadequate but also difficult to exhibit their benefits to the victims with the traumatized incident and abuse (Lamb & Murphy, 2002). Additionally, victims of intimate partner violence may choose to forgive their partners in order to avoid addressing anger or because of the lack of alternatives (Lamb, 2002). Furthermore, forgiving an abusive partner may be associated with lowered self-esteem (Murphy, 2003; Neu, 2002). Specifically, it has been demonstrated that women with low levels of self-esteem tend to forgive their partners after their transgressions (Neto & Mullet, 2004). These therapeutic cautions suggest the need to examine the role of forgiveness in victims of inter-partner violence and abuse.

In the coping process, control also plays an important role (Folkman, 1984; Follingstad, Brennan, Hause, Polek, & Ratledge, 1991; Janoff-Bulman, 1992; Tennen & Affleck, 1990). An increase in perceived control is associated with the forgiveness process (Gordon, Baucom & Snyder, 2000), and to forgive one's abusive partner results in an increased level of perceived control (Witvliet et al., 2001), which has been shown to reduce negative affect (Clements, Sabourin, & Spiby, 2004; O'Neill & Kerig, 2000).

To analyze the role of perceived control, Frazier, Berman and Steward (2002) proposed the Temporal Model. According to this model, the relationships between different types of perceived control and distress vary greatly. In this model, past control is related to the perception that the event was controllable, while present control is the degree to which the victim experiences control over the current impact of the event.

In the Temporal Model, present levels of perceived control have been associated with lower levels of Post Traumatic Stress Disorder symptoms and stress, while past perceived control has been associated with higher levels of PTSD symptoms (Frazier, 2003; Lee, 2005). As such, it is important to examine the roles of forgiveness on both past and present control in order to elucidate the underlying recovery processes associated with intimate-partner violence.

The previous studies suggested that forgiveness intervention can be the alternative tactic to the intimate partner violence victims suffering from many psychological harmful effects. However, despite of the beneficial effect of forgiveness, there is concerned that prompting forgiveness might

be inappropriate in abusive situation. Especially, advocating forgiveness and compassion toward the partner might focus more on the empathy for the partner and result in discouraging women's self-esteem and self respect. Thus, the effects of forgiveness need to be explored more specifically. In this present study, it is assumed that intrapersonal forgiveness is more helpful to recovering from abusive experience. In this connection we will investigate the effects of intra- and interpersonal forgiveness on negative affect, perceived control, and the intention to terminate an abusive relationship among victims of dating violence.

To fully address the role of forgiveness in intimate-partner violence, we focused on the differential effects of intrapersonal and interpersonal forgiveness. It was hypothesized that there would be significant differences between these two dimensions of forgiveness on negative affect reduction. It was predicted that both intrapersonal and interpersonal forgiveness would be negatively associated with past perceived control but positively associated with present perceived control.

Method

Participants

Participants were recruited from psychology classes at a university in Seoul, South Korea. Among 569 undergraduate women, who complete self-report measure to assess levels of dating violence and relationship commitment, ultimately 43 women were included in this analysis, after excluding outliers. Participants experienced mild to severe degrees of dating violence in their current relationships. The average age of the participants was 21.19 (*SD* 1.829). The degrees of dating violence of participants ranged from 27 to 54 and the average score was 32.56 (*SD* 5.40).

Measures

Dating Violence: The degree of dating violence committed by the current romantic partner was assessed using the Revised Conflict Tactic Scale (CTS-2; Straus, Hamby, Boney-McCoy, & Sugarman, 1996). In Korea, S. R. Kim (1999) translated and validated the CTS-2 for use with

a Korean population. The CTS-2 assesses the way in which intimate partners resolve conflicts, and it includes 22 items, composed of 11 items measuring psychological violence and 11 items measuring physical violence. Responses were recorded on a five-point scale, and the Cronbach's alpha for this measure in the current study was 0.72.

Commitment: Commitment to the relationship was measured with the commitment subscale of the Investment Model Scale, developed by Rusbult, Martz and Agnew (1998) and translated into Korean by Lee, Hyun and Yoo (2007). The Investment Model Scale is a four-point scale which consists of 38 items assessing relationship satisfaction, commitment, qualities of alternatives, and investment to the relationship. Cronbach's alpha for the commitment scale was 0.81 in this study.

Negative Affect: The Positive Affect and Negative Affect Schedule (PANAS) was used to assess the levels of negative affect of the participants' pre- and post treatment. The PANAS was developed by Watson, Clark and Tellegen (1988), and validated in Korean by Lee, Kim, and Lee (2003). This scale assesses positive and negative affects on a five-point scale (0=disagree strongly, 4=agree strongly). In the present study, only the ten items assessing negative affect were included in the analysis. Cronbach's alphas for negative affect pre- and post treatment were 0.82 and 0.88, respectively, in this study.

Subjective Forgiveness: In the current study, the Visual Analogue Scale (VAS) was used to measure the degree of subjective forgiveness of each participant. The VAS is commonly used to measure pain across a continuum (Keele, 1948). Participants marked the point corresponded to their degree of forgiveness on a 100 mm line, the ends of which were labeled 'do not forgive (0)' and 'totally forgive (100)'.

Perceived Control: Perceived control was measured using the Assault Attribution Questionnaire (AAQ), the Korean revised version of the Rape Attribution Questionnaire (RAQ) (Frazier, 2003), which has been validated for use in a domestic violence population by Lee (2005). The AAQ consisted of 25 items assessing five dimensions of perceived control based on the Temporal Model. In the present study, ten items measuring past and present control were used. Responses were reported

on a five-point scale, and Cronbach's alpha for past control was 0.69 and was 0.74 for present control.

Intention to terminate the relationship: To measure participants' intentions to terminate abusive relationships, four items from the Intent to Return Questionnaire (Gordon et al, 2004) were used. In analysis process, the four items were reverse-coded and the Cronbach's alpha for this measure was 0.89.

Procedure

After an orientation and receipt of the informed consent, participants were asked to recall a recent physically or psychologically abusive act committed by their partner while listening to a four-minute instructional audiotape. Following the recall phase, participants were asked to document the episode in writing, along with their thoughts and feelings of the event. Then, participants completed the PANAS and VAS to assess pre-manipulation levels of emotions and forgiveness.

During the manipulation phase, participants were assigned to one of three groups: intrapersonal forgiveness, interpersonal forgiveness, or control. In the intra- and interpersonal forgiveness conditions, participants listened to five minutes of instructions suggesting a particular coping style for the incident that they had just recalled. In the control condition, the participants spent five minutes answering a simple reasoning question.

The forgiveness instructions were based on the intrapsychic and interpersonal forgiveness instructions developed by Cardi et al.(2007). In the present study, the forgiveness instructions were revised and designed in accordance with the literature on the dimensions of forgiveness (Baumeister et al., 1998; McCullough & Worthington; 1995) and on the forgiveness therapy manual developed by K. S. Kim (1999) and Lee (2008).

The intrapersonal forgiveness instructions were designed to encourage concentration on the psychological benefits of releasing negative emotions and thoughts. These instructions focused on alleviating psychological suffering and resentment and improving self-concepts. The interpersonal forgiveness instructions emphasized the beneficial effects of restoring damaged relationships and encouraged participants to consider situational and external variables. In both conditions, the introductions began by empathizing with the participants' pain. The differences be-

tween two forgiveness conditions were the reason given for why forgiveness was needed and the explained beneficial effects of forgiveness. Following the manipulation, the concept of the study was explained to participants. They were given information about dating violence and the appropriate way to cope with dating violence situations along with the contacts of counseling centers where they can get help.

Results

Manipulation check

Prior to the main analysis, the negative affect and forgiveness scores of the different experimental groups were compared to determine whether they differed prior to treatment. According to one-way ANOVA, the groups' levels of forgiveness and negative affect prior to treatment did not differ, $F(2,40)=0.269$, $p=0.765$; $F(2,40)=0.710$, $p=0.498$. Table 2 shows the descriptive analysis of the three conditions.

Table 1
Means and standard deviations for assessments among the group conditions

		Control (N=13)	Intrapersonal Forgiveness (N=14)	Interpersonal Forgiveness (N=16)
PANAS-N	Pre	12.92 (9.12)	15.36 (7.20)	12.44 (4.60)
	Post	11.38 (8.03)	4.29 (3.58)	6.38 (6.23)
Forgiveness	Pre	55.54 (25.78)	52.14 (25.74)	58.62 (21.13)
	Post	56.31 (27.24)	70.93 (20.24)	68.38 (24.17)
Past control		14.38 (2.22)	15.36 (2.34)	15.69 (2.33)
Present control		16.31 (3.68)	18.93 (3.13)	19.25 (3.84)
Intention to leave		9.42 (2.09)	9.21 (4.46)	8.63 (3.98)
Dating violence		31.31 (4.15)	33.36 (3.50)	32.88 (7.42)
Commitment		13.69 (3.47)	14.23 (3.44)	15.20 (3.14)

To examine the effects of the forgiveness interventions, a three (control, intrapersonal forgiveness, interpersonal forgiveness) and two (pre, post treatment) repeated measures ANOVA was conducted. As shown in Table 2 and Figure 1, the main effect of time [$F(1,40)=26.815$, $p<0.001$] and the interaction effect of time and group were significant

[$F(2,40)=7.207, p<0.01$], while the main effect of group was not significant [$F(2,40)=0.399, p=0.674$]. Furthermore, in the control condition, there were no differences in forgiveness scores between pre- and post-treatment [$t(12)=-0.443, p=0.666$]. However, participants in the intra- and interpersonal forgiveness conditions had greater forgiveness scores after the instructions [$t(13)=-4.517, p<0.001$; $t(15)=-3.047, p<0.01$, respectively]. The results indicated that both forgiveness interventions successfully induced forgiveness.

Table 2
ANOVA for forgiveness

		<i>SS</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>MS</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>partial η²</i>
Forgiveness	between	862.271	2	431.135	0.399(.674)	0.020
	error	43240.310	40	1081.008		
	within	2036.455	1	2036.455	26.815***	0.401
	error	1094.656	2	547.328	7.207**	0.265
		3037.832	40	75.946		

* $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$

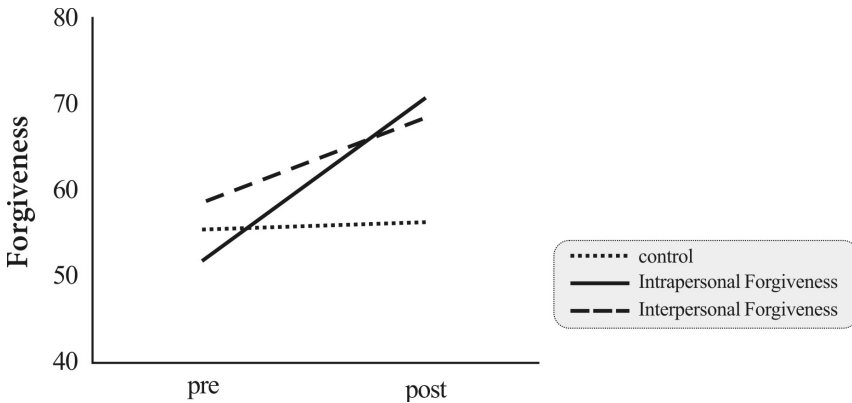


Figure 1. Changes in forgiveness according to group

The effects of intrapersonal and interpersonal forgiveness
 First, the effectiveness of the forgiveness conditions for reducing negative affect were examined. According to the repeated measures

ANOVA shown in Table 3, the main effect of time [$F(1,40)=65.288$, $p<0.001$] and the interaction effect of time and group were significant, [$F(2,40)=12.128$, $p<0.001$], whereas the main effect of group was not significant [$F(2,40)=.805$, $p=0.454$]. Figure 2 shows the interaction effect of time and group on negative affect. Comparing the simple effects, negative affect was shown to be significantly reduced in both forgiveness conditions [$t(13)=7.928$, $p<0.001$; $t(15)=5.178$, $p<0.001$], but not in the control condition [$t(12)=1.059$, $p=0.310$].

To compare the effects of intra- and interpersonal forgiveness on negative affect, changes in negative affect from pre- to post-treatment were examined. One-way ANOVA test revealed significant differences among the three conditions [$F(2,40)=12.128$, $p<0.001$]. A *Scheffe* analysis revealed that the level of negative affect reduction was greater in the intrapersonal forgiveness condition than those in the other two conditions, while change in negative affect due to interpersonal forgiveness was not significantly higher than that in the control group. This indicates that the intrapersonal forgiveness condition had a stronger effect on the reduction of negative affect compared to that of interpersonal forgiveness.

To examine whether the forgiveness conditions influenced perceived control and intention to terminate the relationship, a one-way ANOVA test was conducted. This analysis revealed that present perceived control was significantly higher in the two forgiveness conditions than it was in the control condition [$F(1,41)=6.529$, $p<0.05$]. There were no significant differences between the forgiveness and control conditions with respect to past perceived control [$F(1,41)=2.309$, $p=0.136$] or the intention to terminate the relationship [$F(1,41)=0.237$, $p=0.629$].

Table 3
ANOVA for negative affect

		<i>SS</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>MS</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>partial η^2</i>
Negative Affect	between					
	group	120.883	2	60.441	.805	.039
	error	3003.221	40	75.080		
	within					
	time	826.785	1	826.785	65.288***	.620
	time X group	307.173	2	153.586	12.128***	.377
	error	506.548	40	12.664		

* $p<0.05$, ** $p<0.01$, *** $p<0.001$

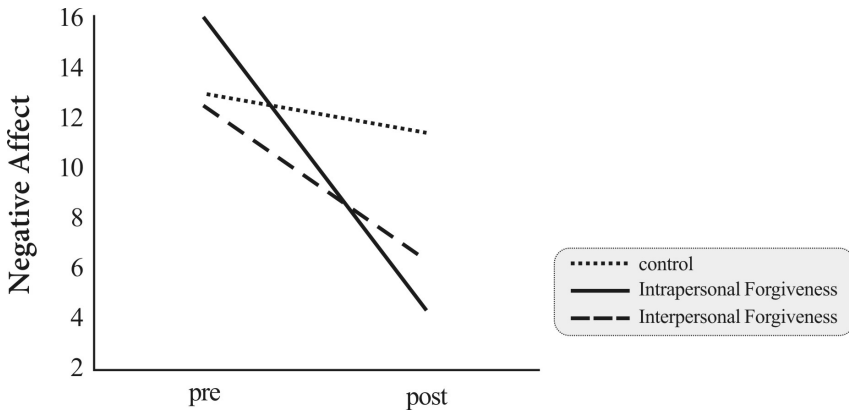


Figure 2. Changes in negative affect

Discussion

The purpose of this study was to examine the differential effects of intra- and interpersonal forgiveness on the recovery processes of dating violence victims. Previous literature on forgiveness has focused mostly on the beneficial effects of forgiveness, including enhanced psychological wellbeing and pro-social changes toward the transgressor, such as prompting restoration of the damaged relationship (Freedman & Enright, 1996; McCullough, 2000; Park, 2003; Ysseldyk, Matheson, & Anisman, 2007). However, the existing literature is limited with respect to its ability to explain the roles of forgiveness in abuse or other traumatic incidents. Thus, this study attempted to illuminate the benefits of forgiveness in dating violence by dividing forgiveness into intrapersonal and interpersonal dimensions. This distinction was expected to be useful in determining the effects of forgiveness on the recovery processes of dating violence victims.

As predicted, there were significant differences in negative affect among the three intervention condition groups. Specifically, participants in the intrapersonal forgiveness condition had greater decreases in their levels of negative affect than did individuals in the interpersonal forgiveness and control conditions. These findings demonstrate that intrapersonal forgiveness may be more effective at reducing negative affect than is interpersonal forgiveness. However, there were no significant dif-

ferences between the intra- and interpersonal forgiveness groups with respect to changes in levels of forgiveness. This finding is consistent with previous studies which have demonstrated that the intrapersonal dimension of forgiveness directly reduces negative emotion, while the interpersonal dimension indirectly affects negative emotions by affecting relationships with others (Lawler et al., 2005; Worthington, et al., 2007). In particular, Cardi et al. (2007) found that the intrapersonal dimension of forgiveness was more effective at reducing negative affect in women with a history of victimization than was interpersonal forgiveness.

Both forgiveness instructions significantly influenced present levels of perceived control, but neither influenced past levels of perceived control. This finding suggests that forgiveness may be beneficial to the recovery and coping processes, without directly affecting the ruminating process regarding responsibility associated with the incident. This finding is consistent with the results of Witvlet et al. (2001) which showed a positive association between forgiveness and perceived control.

Finally, neither intrapersonal forgiveness nor interpersonal forgiveness influences the participants' intentions to terminate the relationship. The stay-leave process of an abusive relationship tends to occur over a long period of time (Lerner & Kennedy, 2000). Additionally, external and relational factors, including economic dependence, commitment to or length of the relationship, may influence women's decisions to terminate a relationship (Gondolf, 1988; Rusbult, 1983; Rusbult & Martz, 1995; Schutte et al., 1988; Strube & Barbour, 1983). Additionally, the factors that influence women's decisions to leave an abusive relationship may interfere with her perceptions of control over terminating the relationship (Byrne & Arias, 2004). Therefore, a brief exposure to a forgiveness intervention was unlikely to influence these women's intentions to terminate their relationships.

These results have several meaningful implications. First, by dividing forgiveness into intra- and interpersonal dimensions, a multidimensional approach was taken to studying forgiveness. This approach is in accordance with previous research that argues that forgiveness is a complex process involving cognitive, behavioral, affective, and motivational changes (Enright, Gassin, & Wu, 1992; McCullough et al., 1998; Worthington, 2005; Worthington & Wade, 1999). In particular, the multidimensional approach is useful for determining which dimension is

most beneficial in specific contexts. However, there have been few empirical studies that have examined the dimensions of forgiveness, and there are no measures that independently assess intrapersonal and interpersonal aspects of forgiveness. Thus, the results of this study provide evidence that forgiveness has differential effects depending on the dimension.

These results demonstrate the importance of the distinction between intra- and interpersonal forgiveness among intimate partner violence victims. In the present study, it was determined that interpersonal or conciliatory aspects of forgiveness were not effective to the victim of an abusive relationship (Cardi et al., 2007; Noll, 2005). Additionally, forgiving the offender is not always the best coping strategy to reduce the stresses associated with these types of transgressions (Wade & Worthington, 2003; Witvliet et al., 2008). Thus, the topic of interpersonal forgiveness for abused patients in therapeutic settings should be approached gently.

The present study provides guidance for forgiveness therapies focused on partner violence victims. Some researchers have insisted that forgiveness intervention for sexual abuse and domestic violence victims is psychologically beneficial (Freedman & Enright, 1996; Reed & Enright, 2006). In accordance with this belief, our results provide evidence that moving on or letting go of anger and revenge are more beneficial to psychological wellbeing than is prompting pro-social behavioral toward an abusive partner.

Especially, Koreans tend to perceive that forgiveness always include the concept of restoration and compassion with the transgressor (Oh, 2006). With this in mind, to identify different effects of intra-interpersonal forgiveness can provide the evidence that it is more important to concentrate on the healing process of negative thought and affect to Korean women who historically have been in abusive relationships. Further, some therapists argued that prompt forgiving and empathy for the transgressor might encourage women to suppress anger without integrating it. In this context, focusing on interpersonal components of forgiveness to abuse and violence victims might reinforce the gender role that female should not express their anger overtly and have to endure hurtful feelings. Thus this action could suppress appropriate expression of anger and discourage the self-esteem and sense of self agen-

cy (Lamb, 2002; Murphy, 2003; Neu, 2002). These researches emphasize that the ventilation and release of anger and negative affect need to precede forgiveness therapy for victims of intimate partner violence.

In this regard, the findings of present study provide evidence that intrapersonal forgiveness, making people focus more on the healing and let go hurtful feelings, is more helpful to improve psychological well-being for women in abusive relationship.

Recent studies have argued that forgiveness in the context of abuse or other traumatic events should be more focused on improving self-enhancement and letting go of negative thoughts and emotions (Walton, 2005). Specifically, Walton (2005) developed a therapeutic forgiveness model for empowering victims of abuse. According to this model, forgiveness therapy for victims of abuse needs to include the process of taking responsibility for protecting themselves from further abuse. In the sense that this therapy stresses self-enhancement and personal growth and does not include the restoration of the relationship, Walton (2005) also emphasizes the intrapersonal dimension of forgiveness.

There are several limitations of this study that need to be mentioned. First, offender variables, such as apology and repentance, were not considered. As apologies and repentance are reliable predictors of forgiveness (Exline & Baumeister, 2000; Kim & Lim, 2006), there is the potential that participants who had received an apology or amends from their partners may have reported less negative emotion regardless of the instruction. Although offender variables can influence the level of forgiveness, its connection with the psychological recovery process is unclear. Furthermore, after receiving an apology, the abusive partner tends to return to victimization (Walker, 1979).

Second, as we used a self-reported questionnaire, there is the potential that participants exaggerated or distorted their experiences of forgiveness or negative affect. Given this limitation, the current findings should be replicated in a future study.

Finally, the participants were only briefly exposed to the forgiveness intervention. Although the initial responses to the intrapersonal and interpersonal forgiveness were different, reactions to the intervention over time may change or display another pattern. Additionally, whether or not the effects of the forgiveness interventions are effective over time was not assessed.

In conclusion, the results of this study demonstrate that interpersonal and intrapersonal forgiveness have different effects in the context of abuse. Further, it provides evidence that intrapersonal aspects of forgiveness are more beneficial to dating violence victims compared to interpersonal aspects. Although degrees of forgiveness were not significantly related to intentions to terminate the abusive relationship, we did find that forgiveness was related to the victim's coping process.

References

- Ahn, G. Y. R. (2001). Seongjanggi'e bumou'ui baewoja pokryeok'e nochuldoen gyeongheomgwa chogi seongingi'ui jeokeung [Childhood exposure to parental partner abuse and early adulthood adaptation]. *The Korean Journal of Clinical Psychology, 20*, 679-695.
- Aguilar, R. J., & Nightingale, N. N. (1994). The impact of specific battering experiences on the self-esteem of abused women. *Journal of Family Violence, 9*, 35-45.
- Baumeister, R. F., Exline, J. J., & Sommer, K. L. (1998). The victim role, grudge theory, and two dimensions of forgiveness. In E. L. Worthington Jr. (Ed.), *Dimensions of Forgiveness* (pp. 79-104). Philadelphia: Templeton Foundation Press.
- Byrne, C. A., & Arias, I. (2004). Predicting women's intentions to leave abusive relationships: An application of the theory of planned behavior. *Journal of Applied Social Psychology, 34*, 2586-2601.
- Cardi, M., Milich, R., Harris, M. J., & Kearns, E. (2007). Self-esteem moderates the response to forgiveness instructions among women with a history of victimization. *Journal of Research in Personality, 41*, 804-819.
- Cascardi, M., & O'Leary, K. D. (1992). Depressive symptomatology, self-esteem, and self-blame in battered women. *Journal of Family Violence, 7*, 249-259.
- Cho, H. K. (2001). Daehaksaeng iseounggyojegwangye'eseo balsaenghaneun pokryeok [College students' dating violence: with focus on perpetration and victimization]. Unpublished master's thesis. Sungkonghoe University, Korea.
- Clements, C. M., Sabourin, C. M., & Spiby, L. (2004). Dysphoria and hopelessness following battering: The role of perceived control, coping, and self-esteem. *Journal of Family Violence, 19*, 25-36.
- Enright, R. D., Gassin, E. A., & Wu, C. (1992). Forgiveness: A development view. *Journal of Moral Education, 2*, 99-114.
- Exline, J. J., & Baumeister, R. F. (2000). Expressing forgiveness and repentance: Benefits and barriers. In M. E. McCullough, K. I. Pargament, & C. E. Thoresen (Eds.), *Forgiveness: Theory, Research, and Practice* (pp. 133-155). New York: Guilford.
- Finkel, E. J., Rusbult, C. E., Kumashiro, M., & Hannon, P. A. (2002). Dealing with betrayal in close relationships: Does commitment promote forgiveness of betrayal?. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 82*, 956-974.
- Folkman, S. (1984). Personal control and stress and coping processes: A theoret-

- ical analysis. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 46, 839-852.
- Follingstad, D. R., Brennan, A. F., Hause, E. S., Polek, D. S., & Rutledge, L. L. (1991). Factors moderating physical and psychological symptoms of battered women. *Journal of Family Violence*, 6, 81-95.
- Frazier, P. (2003). Perceived control and distress following sexual assault: A longitudinal test of a new model. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 84, 1257-1269.
- Frazier, P., Berman, M., & Steward, J. (2002). Perceived control and posttraumatic stress: A temporal model. *Applied & Preventive Psychology: Current Perspectives*, 10, 207-223.
- Freedman, S. R., & Enright, R. D. (1996). Forgiveness as an intervention goal with incest survivors. *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology*, 64, 983-992.
- Gondolf, E. W. (1988). Who are those guys? Toward a behavioral typology of batterers. *Violence and Victims*, 3, 187-203.
- Gordon, K. C., Baucom, D. H., & Snyder, D. K.. (2000). The use of forgiveness in marital therapy. In M .E .McCullough, K. I. Pargament, & C. E. Thoresen (Eds.), *Forgiveness: Theory, Research and Practice* (pp. 203-227). London: The Guilford Press.
- Gordon, K. C., Burton, S., & Porter, L. (2004). Predicting the intentions of women in domestic violence shelters to return to partners: Does forgiveness play a role?. *Journal of Family Psychology*, 18, 331-338.
- Hanley, M. J., & O'Neill, P. (1997). Violence and commitment: A study of dating couples. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*, 12, 685-703.
- Janoff-Bulman, R. (1992). *Shattered assumptions: Towards a new psychology of trauma*. New York: Free Press.
- Jezl, D. R., Molider, C. E., & Wright, T. L. (1996). Physical, sexual and psychological abuse in high school dating relationships: Prevalence rate and self-esteem issues. *Child and Adolescent Social Work Journal*, 13(1), 69-87.
- Karremans, J. C., & Aarts, H. (2007). The role of automaticity in determining the inclination to forgive close others. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*, 43, 902-917.
- Katz, J., Street, A., & Arias, I. (1997). Individual differences in self-appraisals and responses to dating violence scenarios. *Violence and Victims*, 12, 265-276.
- Keele, K. D. (1948). The pain chart. *The Lancet*, 2, 6-8.
- Kim, K. B., & Lim, H. J. (2006). Daeingwange yongseo'ui simrijeok gwajeong tamsaek: gonggamgwa sagwaga yongseo'e michineun yeonghyang bunseok [An exploration of psychological process of interpersonal forgiveness: focused on

- effects of empathy and apology on forgiving behavior]. *Korean Journal of Social and Personality Psychology*, 20(2), 19-33.
- Kim, K. S. (1999). Yongseo kyoyuk program gaebal [Development of education program for forgiveness]. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, Seoul National University, Korea.
- Kim, J. R. (1999). Dachaksaeng'ui isunggyojejung pokryeokgwa daecheo hangdong [College students' dating violence and coping behavior]. Unpublished master's thesis, Chon Nam University, Korea.
- Lamb, S. (2002). Women, abuse, and forgiveness: A special case. In S. Lamb & J. G. Murphy (Eds.), *Forgiving: Cautionary views of forgiveness in psychotherapy* (pp. 155-171). New York: Oxford University Press.
- Lamb, S., & Murphy, J. (2002). *Before forgiving: Cautionary views of forgiveness in psychotherapy*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Lawler, K. A., Younger, J. W., Piferi, R. L., Jobe, R. L., Edmondson, K. A., & Jones, W. H. (2005). The unique effects of forgiveness on health: An exploration of pathways. *Journal of Behavioral Medicine*, 28, 157-167.
- Lee, H. H., Kim, E. J., & Lee, M. G. (2003). Hangukpan jeongjeok jeongseo mit bujeok jeongseo cheokdo'ui tadanghwa yeongu [Brief report: A validation study of Korea positive and negative affect schedule: The PANAS Scales]. *The Korean Journal of Clinical Psychology*, 22, 935-946.
- Lee, J. E., Hyun, M. H., & Yoo, J. M. (2007). Pokryeokjeok date gwangye jisok'e gwanhan tuja model'ui sujeong:itajeok mangsangeul jungsimeuro [The correction of the investment model regarding the maintenance of violent dating relationships focus on altruistic delusion]. *The Korean Journal of Health Psychology*, 12, 983-995.
- Lee, S. B. (2008). Yongseo simri program'i cheongsonyeon'ui yongseo sujungwa daeingwangye stress'e michineun yeonghyang [The effectiveness of a forgiveness psycho-educational program for adolescents on their forgiveness and interpersonal stress]. Unpublished master's thesis, Seoul Women's University, Korea.
- Lee, S. J. (2005). Gajeong pokryek pihayeoseongdeul'ui jigakdoen tongjegamgwa hoepi daecheoga oesanghu stress jeungsang'e michineun yeonghyang [The effects of perceived control and avoidance coping on post-traumatic stress symptoms in female victims of domestic violence]. Unpublished master's thesis, Han Lim University, Korea.
- Lerner, C. F., & Kennedy, L. T. (2000). Stay-leave decision making in battered women: Trauma, coping, and self-efficacy. *Cognitive Therapy and Research*, 24, 215-232.

- Maltby, J., Macaskill, A., & Day, L. (2001). Failure to forgive self and others: a replication and extension of the relationship between forgiveness, personality, social desirability and general health. *Personality and Individual Differences, 30*, 881-885.
- McCullough, M. E. (2000). Forgiveness as human strength: Theory, measurement, and links to well-being. *Journal of Social and Clinical Psychology, 19*, 43-55.
- McCullough, M. E., Rachal, K. C., Sandage, S. J., Worthington, E. L., Wade-Brown, S., & Hight, T. (1998). Interpersonal forgiving in close relationships II: Theoretical elaboration and measurement. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 75*, 1586-1603.
- McCullough, M. E., & Worthington, E. L. (1995). Promoting forgiveness: A comparison of two brief psycho-educational group interventions with a waiting-list control. *Counseling and Values, 40*, 55-68.
- Mills, R. B., & Malley-Morrison, K. (1998). Emotional commitment, normative acceptability, and attributions for abusive partner behaviors. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence, 13*, 682-699.
- Murphy, J. (2003). *Getting even : Forgiveness and its limits*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Neto, F., & Mullet, E. (2004). Personality, self-esteem, and self-construal as correlates of forgivingness. *European Journal of Personality, 18*, 15-30.
- Neu, J. (2002). To understand all is to forgive all-or is it?. In S. Lamb & G. J. Murphy (Eds.), *Before forgiving: Cautionary views of forgiveness in psychotherapy*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Noll, J. G. (2003, October). *The process of forgiving childhood sexual abuse*. Paper presented at the Conference on Scientific Findings About Forgiveness. Atlanta, GA.
- Noll, J. G. (2005). Forgiveness in people experiencing trauma. In E. L. Worthington (Ed.), *Handbook of forgiveness* (pp. 363-376). New York: Routledge.
- Oh, Y. H. (2006). Hangukin'ui sangcheowa yongseo'e dachan josa [A survey of hurt and forgiveness of Korean people]. *The Korean journal of Educational Psychology, 20*, 467-486.
- O'Leary, D. K. (1999). Psychological abuse: A variable deserving critical attention in domestic violence. *Violence and Victims, 14*(1), 3-23.
- O'Neill, M. L. & Kerig, P. K. (2000). Attributions of self-blame and perceived control of moderators of adjustment in battered women. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence, 15*, 1036-1049.
- Park, J. H. (2003). Yongseowa gungang'ui gwanryeonseong tamsack [Exploration of the relation between forgiveness and health]. *The Korean Journal of Health Psychology, 8*, 301-321.

- Pimlott-Kubiak, S., & Cortina, L. M. (2003). Gender, victimization, and outcomes: Reconceptualizing risk. *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology, 71*, 528-539.
- Reed, G. L. & Enright, R. D. (2006). The effects of forgiveness therapy on depression, anxiety, and posttraumatic stress for women after spousal emotional abuse. *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology, 74*, 920-929.
- Ronfeldt, H. M., Kimerling, R., & Arias, I. (1998). Satisfaction with relationship power and the perpetration of dating violence. *Journal of Marriage and the Family, 60*, 70-78.
- Roscoe, B., & Benaske, N. (1985). Courtship violence experienced by abused wives: Similarities in patterns of abuse. *Family Relations, 34*, 419-424.
- Rusbult, C. (1983). A longitudinal test of the investment model: The development (and deterioration) of satisfaction and commitment in heterosexual involvements. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 45*, 172-186.
- Rusbult, C. E., & Martz, J. M. (1995). Remaining in an abusive relationship: An investment model analysis of nonvoluntary dependence. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin, 21*, 558-571.
- Rusbult, C. E., Martz, J. M., & Agnew, C. R. (1998). The investment model scale: Measuring commitment level, quality of alternatives, and investment size. *Personal Relationships, 5*, 357-391.
- Scherbath, A. J. (2007). Psychological abuse and health: What role does forgiveness play?. Unpublished master's thesis, The North Texas University, USA.
- Schutte, N. S., Malouff, J. M., & Doyle, J. S. (1988). The relationships between characteristics of the victim, persuasive techniques of the batterer, and returning to a battering relationship. *Journal of Social Psychology, 128*, 605-610.
- Smith, B. A., Tomaka, J., Thompson, S., & Buchanan, A. (2005). Development of the intimate partner violence attitude (IPVA) scales. *Hispanic Journal of Behavioral Sciences, 27*, 442-454.
- Straus, M. A., Hamby, S. L., Boney-McCoy, S., & Sugarman, D. B. (1996). The revised conflict tactics scales (CTS2). *Journal of Family Issues, 17*, 283-316.
- Strube, M. J., & Barbour, L. S. (1983). The decision to leave an abusive relationship: Economic dependence and psychological commitment. *Journal of Marriage and the Family, 45*, 785-793.
- Suh, K. H. (2002). cheongsoneon deul'ui date pokryeok gahae hangdong'e daehan sahochakseupjeok byeonindeulgwa bunno'ui yeokhal [The Role of anger and variables from social learning theory in inflicting dating violence among adolescents]. *The Korean Journal of Psychological and Social Issues, 8*, 1-15.
- Suh, K. H. (2004). Godeunghaksaenggwae daehaksaeng'ui date pokryeokgwae ga-jongpokryeok'ui gwangye'esecoui sung'ui jojeol hyogwa [The moderate effect

- of gender on the relationship between domestic violence and dating violence among high school and college students]. *The Korean Journal of Health Psychology*, *9*, 147-162.
- Suh, K. H., & Ahn, G. Y. R. (2007). Characteristics of aggressive victims of dating violence and their commitments in dating relationships. *The Korean Journal of Psychological and Social Issues*, *13*, 77-96.
- Tennen, H., & Affleck, G. (1990). Blaming others for threatening events. *Psychological Bulletin*, *108*, 209-232.
- Wade, N. G., & Worthington, E. L. (2003). Overcoming interpersonal offenses: Is forgiveness the only way to deal with unforgiveness?. *Journal of Counseling and Development*, *81*, 343-353.
- Walker, L. E. (1979). *The Battered Woman*. New York: Harper and Row.
- Walker, L. E. (1983). The battered woman syndrome study. In D. Finkelhor, R. J. Gelles, G. T. Hotaling, & M. A. Straus, (Eds.), *The Dark Side of Families* (pp. 31-48). Beverly Hills: Sage.
- Wallace, H. M., Exline, J. J., & Baumeister, R. F. (2008). Interpersonal consequences of forgiveness: Does forgiveness deter or encourage repeat offenses?. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*, *44*, 453-460.
- Walton, E. (2005). Therapeutic forgiveness: Developing a model for empowering victims of sexual abuse. *Clinical Social Work Journal*, *33*, 193-207.
- Watson, D., Clark, L. A., & Tellegen, A. (1988). Development and validation of brief measures of positive and negative affect: The PANAS scale. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *54*, 1063-1073.
- Witvliet, C. V. O., Ludwig, T. E., & Van der Laan, K. (2001). Granting forgiveness or harboring grudges: Implications for emotion, Physiology, and Health. *Psychological Science*, *12*, 117-123.
- Witvliet, C. V. O., Worthington, E. L., Root, L. M., Sato, A. F., Ludwig, T. E., & Exline, J. J. (2008). Retributive justice, restorative justice, and forgiveness: An experimental psychophysiology analysis. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*, *44*, 10-25.
- Woods, S. J. (2000). Prevalence and patterns of posttraumatic stress disorder in abused and postabused women. *Issues in Mental Health Nursing*, *21*, 309-324.
- Worthington, E. L. (2005). More questions about forgiveness: Research agenda for 2005-2015. In E. L. Worthington Jr. (Ed.), *Handbook of Forgiveness* (pp. 557-574). New York: Brunner-Routledge.
- Worthington, E. L., & Scherer, M. (2004). Forgiveness is an emotion -focused coping strategy that can reduce health risks and promote health resilience: Theory, review, and hypotheses. *Psychology and Health*, *19*, 385-405.

- Worthington, E. L., & Wade, N. G. (1999). The social psychology of unforgiveness and forgiveness and implications for clinical practice. *Journal of Social and Clinical Psychology, 18*, 385-418.
- Worthington, E. L., Witvliet, C. V. O., Pietrini, P., & Miller, A. J. (2007). Forgiveness, health, and well-being: A review of evidence for emotional versus decisional forgiveness, dispositional forgiveness, and reduced unforgiveness. *Journal of Behavioral Medicine, 30*, 291-302.
- Ysseldyk, R., Matheson, K., & Anisman, H. (2007). Rumination: Bridging a gap between forgiveness, vengefulness, and psychological health. *Personality and Individual Differences, 42*, 1573-1584.

Biographical Note: **Sung Yi Cha** received her Master's Degree from the Department of Clinical Psychology, Chung-Ang University in Seoul, Republic of Korea. She works with the Severance Mental Health Hospital as a clinical psychologist resident. Her research interests include forgiveness, dating violence, and PTSD. She can be reached at thechas2@naver.com.

Biographical Note: **Myoung Ho Hyun** received his Ph.D in Clinical Psychology from Chung-Ang University. He is a professor at Chung-Ang University where he teaches clinical psychology and abnormal psychology. His research interests include forgiveness, suicide, addictive behavior and ACT. He can be reached at hyunmh@cau.ac.kr.

Biographical Note: **Young Sun Ra** received her Master's Degree from the Department of Clinical Psychology, Chung-Ang University in Seoul, Republic of Korea. She works with the Inje University Ilsan Paik Hospital as a clinical psychologist resident. Her research interests include forgiveness, child abuse, and PTSD. She can be reached at rys00@hanmail.net.

Biographical Note: **SunYoung Yoon** finished the doctoral course in Clinical Psychology from Chung-Ang University. She is a clinical psychologist with Gangdong Kyunghee University hospital in the Republic of Korea. Her research interests are forgiveness programs and CBT in bullying victims. She can be reached at ysy@khnmc.or.kr.