

**THE LIVED EXPERIENCE OF FORGIVENESS/UNFORGIVENESS IN
VICTIMS OF VIOLENT CRIME
An Empirical Phenomenological Study**

**A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the Masters
Degree in Social Science (Clinical Psychology) in the School of Psychology at
the University of Kwa-Zulu Natal, Pietermaritzburg.**

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October 2004

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to express my appreciation to the following individuals:

My Supervisor, Professor Graham Lindegger for his support, guidance and sharp insight. His encouraging and challenging style has provided an enormous contribution to my study.

Mrs Gail Nicolson for her support during my internship year.

The victims who participated in this study who openly discussed their sensitive experience.

My husband, Warren for his love, support and patience.

My family for their encouragement and financial assistance.

DECLARATION

I declare that this thesis is my own original work. All other sources of references have been acknowledged.

ABSTRACT

The aim of this study was to investigate the lived experience of forgiveness or unforgiveness in individuals who had been victims of violent crime. 6 participants who had experienced violent crime underwent an in-depth interview (Silverman, 2000) aimed at gathering descriptions of their life world with respect to their experience of forgiveness/unforgiveness. The method used to analyse the transcriptions was Giorgi's (1985) phenomenological method adapted slightly by Wertz (1985 as cited in Giorgi, 1985). Findings indicated that the capacity to forgive is associated with the way in which individuals see themselves, others, their world and their perpetrators. Results were discussed with reference to the literature reviewed and an Object Relations Theoretical framework was introduced in order to explain and illuminate some of the findings. The implications and limitations of the study are discussed as well as recommendations for future research.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

| | |
|---|-----|
| TITLE PAGE | i |
| ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS | ii |
| DECLARATION | ii |
| ABSTRACT | iii |
| TABLE OF CONTENTS | iv |
| | |
| 1. INTRODUCTION | 1 |
| 1.1 Defining Forgiveness | 2 |
| 1.1.1 Clarifying the Concept of Forgiveness..... | 2 |
| 1.1.2 The Definition..... | 3 |
| 1.2 Defining Violent Crime | 5 |
| 1.3 Brief History of Forgiveness Research | 5 |
| 1.3.1 The Absence of Forgiveness in Psychological Literature..... | 5 |
| 1.3.2 Previous Research and rationale for the Study..... | 6 |
| | |
| 2. LITERATURE REVIEW | 8 |
| 2.1 Introduction | 8 |
| 2.2 Forgiveness Research | 9 |
| 2.1.1 The Psychological Effects of Trauma..... | 9 |
| 2.1.2 The Therapeutic effect of forgiveness: Intervention research..... | 11 |
| 2.1.3 Psychological Variables Related to Forgiveness..... | 16 |

| | | |
|------------|--|-----------|
| 2.1.4 | The Process of Forgiveness..... | 26 |
| 2.1.5 | Forgiveness and Personality..... | 34 |
| 2.1.6 | Psychodynamic Object Relation's Perspective..... | 35 |
| 2.3 | Conclusion..... | 42 |
| | | |
| 3. | METHODOLOGY..... | 45 |
| | | |
| 3.1 | Rationale and Aims..... | 45 |
| 3.1.1 | Rationale..... | 45 |
| 3.1.2 | Aims..... | 47 |
| 3.2 | Research Design..... | 48 |
| 3.3 | Collection of Data..... | 49 |
| 3.3.1 | Research questions..... | 50 |
| 3.3.2 | Subjects..... | 50 |
| 3.3.3 | Ethical Considerations..... | 51 |
| 3.3.4 | Interviews..... | 52 |
| 3.4 | Data Analysis..... | 53 |
| | | |
| 4. | RESULTS..... | 59 |
| | | |
| 4.1 | A Summary of the Experience of Forgiveness/unforgiveness..... | 59 |

| | | |
|------------|--|-----|
| 4.2 | Results Explanation | 66 |
| 4.2.1 | Table 1: Before Victimization..... | 66 |
| 4.2.2 | Table 2: After Victimization with or without Forgiveness..... | 67 |
| 5. | DISCUSSION | 73 |
| 5.1 | Commonality of the Participants' Experience | 73 |
| 5.1.1 | The Effect of Violent Crime..... | 73 |
| 5.2 | The Experience of Forgiveness Compared to Unforgiveness | 74 |
| 5.2.1 | Self-representation..... | 74 |
| 5.2.2 | Representation of Others..... | 77 |
| 5.2.3 | Representation of the Perpetrators..... | 78 |
| 5.2.4 | Representation of the World and Life..... | 84 |
| 5.2.5 | Personal Relationships..... | 87 |
| 5.3 | The Experience of Forgiveness/Unforgiveness | 88 |
| 5.4 | Comparison with Research on Intimate Relationships | 95 |
| 5.5 | Theoretical Conclusions | 96 |
| 5.6 | Implications of the Study | 98 |
| 6. | CONCLUSION | 101 |
| 6.1 | Summary | 101 |
| 6.2 | Limitations of the study | 102 |
| 6.3 | Recommendations for Future Research | 103 |

| | | |
|-----------|------------------------|------------|
| 7. | REFERENCES..... | 106 |
| 8. | APPENDICES..... | 115 |

1. INTRODUCTION

“To forgive is to set a prisoner free and to discover that the prisoner was you”
(Anonymous).

We live in a world where violent crime, hatred and animosity are rife and South Africa is no exception. According to Dempster (2002) for many in South Africa, violence has become a way of life. Therefore it is not surprising that South Africa has one of the highest murder rates in the world (Dempster, 2002). Unfortunately violent crime is not an isolated event. The detrimental effects may often penetrate far into the future of a victim’s life. The results can be devastating, as victims of crime may be crippled by fear and hatred or become criminals themselves (Pingleton, 1997), particularly in circumstances of severe economic deprivation and desperation (Dempster, 2002). Criminal victimisation is defined by Davenport (1991) as a lack of freedom to act, where one is violated in a manner in which there is no escape. When one experiences trauma or victimisation something of significance has been taken away unfairly and the response may be one of anger, fear, resentment or hurt. Negativity in response to the injustice has costs that go beyond the victim’s relationship to the perpetrator, adversely affecting personal relationships, as well as fostering feelings of hostility and undermining physical and mental health (Pargament, 1997). According to Vitz and Mango (1997), humans develop and cling to hatred in response to hurt and trauma, which often perpetuates a vicious cycle of hatred and revenge. Hatred has largely been ignored as a barrier to psychological recovery, although it has been recognized by some as pathological in extreme form (Vitz and Mango, 1997). Forgiveness presents a way to break the cycle and find relief from a life centered on pain and injustice.

1.1 Defining Forgiveness

1.1.1 Clarifying the Concept of Forgiveness

The meaning of the construct of forgiveness is clouded by many misperceptions and misunderstandings. According to Enright, Freedman and Rique (1998) the concept of forgiveness in the literature has been simplified and reduced, diluting and contaminating its meaning. Therefore it is important to clarify the precise nature and meaning of forgiveness. Firstly, forgiveness does not imply simply accepting or tolerating injustices. Secondly, forgiveness does not require that one must forget the offence as it is possible to forgive and still remain conscious of the transgression. Thirdly, forgiveness requires more than ceasing one's anger toward the offender. Forgiveness involves a gift like quality as opposed to a neutral stance. The victim's attitude must allow space for the offender. In this respect forgiveness is perceived as a selfless act in that it is outward looking and other-directed (Enright et al. 1998). Consequently, the motivation to forgive must not originate solely from one's need to feel better. "The paradox is that, when the forgiver abandons a focus on self and gives the gift to the injurer, the forgiver may experience psychological healing" (p.48). In addition, forgiveness is not an immediate reaction or uni-temporal event but is rather a multifaceted process.

A number of concepts are similar to forgiveness but are distinct from it. Firstly, forgiving does not imply that one must overlook, condone or excuse the offence. In other words forgiveness does not negate anger but allows for the resolution of anger or coming to terms with an offence through a process. Secondly, forgiveness is not synonymous with a legal pardon in that it is a personal response to one's own injury. It is possible to

forgive and still bring legal justice to bear as required by the situation. Thirdly, forgiveness is distinct from reconciliation in that forgiveness involves one person's response to a transgression, while reconciliation involves two people reuniting.

1.1.2 The Definition

A number of theorists have constructed various definitions of forgiveness in an attempt to reflect its fundamental meaning. According to Enright et al. (1998) forgiveness is defined as voluntarily discarding one's right to anger, negative judgment and indifferent behaviour toward the one who unfairly caused one harm, while nurturing undeserved qualities of compassion, generosity and even love toward him or her. Doyle (1999) reinforces this definition, suggesting that forgiveness is "the relinquishment of one's desire to retaliate against or permanently condemn one's offender by transforming one's hatred through empathetic understanding of the offender's anguish that prompted his or her harmful act(s)" (p. 191). Similarly, Pingleton (1989, as cited in Sells and Hargrave, 1998) states that: "Forgiveness recognises, anticipates and attempts to mitigate against the *lex talionis*, or law of the talon – the human organism's universal, almost reflexive propensity for retaliation and retribution in the face of hurt and pain at the hand of another. Thus, forgiveness can be understood as comprising the antithesis of the individual's natural and predictable response to violation and victimisation" (p.22).

From the above definitions several observations and assumptions are made. Firstly, the victim suffered unjust or deep hurt from another. It is assumed that forgiveness necessitates the acknowledgement of one's own anger, hurt and resentment toward the

offender. Secondly, the offended individual willingly chooses to forgive, suggesting that forgiveness is an unnatural and therefore effortful response to an injury, contradicting one's instinctual motive for vengeance and retaliation. Thirdly, the victim's new stance includes affect (overcoming anger and substituting compassion), cognition (overcoming condemnation with respect and/or generosity) and behaviour (overcoming indifference or tendency toward revenge with a sense of goodwill). Finally, the word '*undeserved*' from Enright et al.'s (1998) definition implies that the victim may unconditionally forgive regardless of the offender's current attitude or behaviour toward him or her. In this way, forgiveness does not depend on an apology or on the repentance of the offender (Sells and Hargrave, 1998).

Several authors conceptualise forgiveness as an essential and powerful phenomenon. Tutu (1999) argues that forgiveness is not an imprecise or ambiguous idea that one can easily dismiss. He in fact argues that without forgiveness there is no future. "Forgiveness is not pretending that things are other than they are and forgiveness is not cheap. It is facing the ghastliness of what has happened and giving the other person the opportunity of coming out of the ghastly situation" (p.xiii). Victims face the daily-lived memory of their trauma, which has become their reality. Forgiveness becomes a turning point or a new way of conceptualising one's trauma and the negative emotions it evokes. Continued anger has the potential to dominate a victim's life. However, through forgiveness, one is offered a chance to review one's life of anger and resentment toward the offender (Madikizela, 2002). It is the means by which the wounded person breaks the enmeshment of hate/resentment with the injurer (Benson, 1992).

1.2 Defining Violent Crime

Violent crime, like most social behaviour, involves at least two actors and their interaction. The intended victim is the target of violent crime, while offenders are those who intentionally commit a crime. Victim and offender interaction is a sequence of resistance and attack occurring during the crime event. The crime event is one incident surrounded by social relationships, physical structures, neighbourhoods and communities, ideas of violence, self-defence, social class and segregation (Wertz, 1985 as cited in Giorgi, 1985).

1.3 Brief History of Forgiveness Research

1.3.1 The Absence of Forgiveness in Psychological Literature

Until recently, forgiveness has been one of the least studied phenomena in therapeutic literature (Pingleton, 1997). The neglect of forgiveness in psychological literature and therapeutic intervention originates from two main sources.

Firstly, some may argue that to forgive criminals for criminal acts may operate against justice and perhaps perpetuate injustice. However, to forgive does not condone or excuse the offence and is not synonymous with a legal pardon. It is argued that it is possible for forgiveness and justice to coexist and they should not negate one another (Enright, Freedman and Rique, 1998). Furthermore, profound acts of forgiveness raise many questions. Some argue that the perpetrator is not worthy of forgiveness or that the individual is too evil. Labelling in this way creates a polarized perspective of the individual, which makes it very difficult for one to comprehend the act of forgiveness

(Madikizela, 2002). "...using the religious injunction and simply labelling atrocities as evil helps us only to label something that we struggle with by removing it from the human realm. But, it does not help us understand the psychological currents that contribute to this evil" (Madikizela, 2002, p. 19).

Secondly, forgiveness tended to be associated with religion and the subject of pastors rather than clinicians (Doyle, 1999). Fitzgibbons (1986) states that the absence of forgiveness in psychological literature may be due to the concept's association with theology. According to Gartner (1988, as cited in Doyle 1999) "the neglect of forgiveness by mainstream psychology strikes one as a startling discrepancy, given that an increase in the capacity to forgive is widely acknowledged as a hallmark of successful psychotherapy" (p.21). Many psychologists are now recognising the healing potential of forgiveness in therapeutic contexts. Recently there has been an explosion of interest in forgiveness producing considerable theorising, researching and writing about the topic (Pingleton, 1997).

1.3.2 Previous Research and Rationale for the Present Study

The majority of research in the area of forgiveness has investigated forgiveness in the context of close interpersonal relationships through the use of highly controlled, mainly experimental research designs. Research areas include: forgiveness as a therapeutic intervention (Freedman and Enright, 1996 and Hebl and Enright, 1993), the psychological factors influencing forgiveness in close relationships (McCullough, Worthington and Rachal, 1997; Weiner, Graham, Peter and Zmuidinas 1991), the process

of forgiveness (Enright and the Human Development Group, 1994), a phenomenological enquiry (Fow, 1996) and intrapsychic theories of forgiveness (Pingleton, 1997 and Vitz and Mango, 1997). Two major gaps exist in the body of existing literature on forgiveness. Firstly, research on forgiveness has tended to focus on relationships in which the offender and victim are intimate or close, while neglecting the role of forgiveness where the victim and offender are unfamiliar. Secondly, the literature has not yet explored the process by which forgiveness occurs and how the change comes about. The present study aims to address these areas with the use of a phenomenological research design focusing explicitly on the victim's actual experience of forgiveness/unforgiveness. This was achieved by exploring the meaning of forgiveness, along novel dimensions. Specifically the study aims to describe the meaning or lived experience of forgiveness in the context of violent crime, where the offender and victim do not know each other. Furthermore, it appears that previous research in the area of forgiveness has largely been atheoretical in nature, lacking a psychological framework or theory in order to explain and elucidate the findings. Object Relation's Theory will be employed in this study, in order to further illuminate and understand the findings of the research.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

Comparatively little psychological research has been devoted to the phenomenon of forgiveness, particularly in the context of criminal victimisation. Much of the research generated with respect to crime concerns the origins of war, the psychology of aggression and the social and psychological effects of violence (Enright and North, 1998). The majority of research that has been generated concerning forgiveness has primarily been positivist and experimental in nature, devising formulas to help people forgive and assessing the outcomes for those who forgive. The focus has centered on the observation and measuring of behaviour, leaving the experience of the subject largely absent.

Research conducted in this area has resulted largely in a 'cook book' set of instructions, rather than contributing a more complete and detailed understanding of the phenomenon of forgiveness. The multiple meanings of forgiveness and their many relations to one another as the phenomenon presents itself in experience, has only recently begun to be uncovered. Consequently, layers of meaning lie open to be revealed about the phenomenon of forgiveness. In addition, the majority of studies investigating forgiveness have focused on the nature of interpersonal forgiveness, emphasising the effect on the relationship between individuals who know each other intimately, while largely ignoring the experience of forgiveness in those individuals that are unknown to each other.

The following review will look at a number of studies, which have investigated forgiveness, focussing on topics such as its therapeutic effects and benefits, the

psychological factors involved, the process or pathway of forgiveness as well as several Object Relations perspectives.

2.2 Forgiveness Research

2.1.1 The Psychological Effects of Trauma

There has been vast research in the area of psychological trauma. According to Herman (1997) “To study psychological trauma is to come face to face with human vulnerability in the natural world and with the capacity for evil in human nature” (p. 7). Traumatic events collapse an individual’s fundamental beliefs, which provide them with a sense of control, connection and meaning. The ordinary response to trauma is to banish it from consciousness. However, it is impossible to bury trauma without a trace. Individuals who have endured traumatic events suffer predictable psychological harm. There is a spectrum of psychological disorders ranging from a single event to the effects of repeated trauma. The diagnostic criteria for Post Traumatic Stress Disorder provide a brief summary of some of the effects of trauma. These include (1) a re-experiencing of the traumatic event, (2) persistent avoidance of stimuli associated with the trauma, (3) symptoms of increased arousal such as hypervigilance and irritability and (4) clinically significant distress or impairment in social, occupational or other important areas of functioning, which persist for the duration of one month or more (DSM-IV, 1994 as cited in Kaplan and Sadock, 1995).

Coleman (1992 as cited in Flanigan, 1992) investigated the role of forgiveness within the context of trauma. Coleman (1992, as cited in Flanigan, 1992) conducted a study

investigating the forgiveness of seemingly unforgivable transgressions using a sample of 70 subjects between the ages of 17 and 70. Injuries included infidelity, abandonment, burning of property, parental incest, physical abuse and theft. It was observed that one's beliefs are shattered as a result of the offence. And in order to forgive, one experiences a cognitive shift in his or her beliefs in order to create a new theory of life and living.

Furthermore, Coleman (1992, as in Flanigan, 1992) states that one's belief in personal control and rules of justice are shattered along with one's self-worth and the belief of the goodness of others. As one's perception of control and sense of dignity disintegrates one develops a sense of hopelessness and insecurity. Further, intentionally inflicted harm erodes one's sense of self and creates a divide in one's sense of continuity with others.

Madikizela (2002) states: "I think the act of forgiveness resists separating perpetrators from this network of human others and instead recognizes that they are part of the same fabric" (p. 13). This suggests that as a result of trauma by another, one's view of the self and one's perpetrator changes somehow and the self is seen as completely different to the perpetrator and the perpetrator becomes completely different from the rest of human society. In this way one would assume that it would therefore be impossible for the victim to relate to the perpetrator. This implies that the process of forgiveness and of reclaiming control allows one to re-experience oneself in relation to others (Madikizela, 2002). The way in which this happens is yet to be explained or explored.

It would be interesting to investigate the way in which the process of forgiveness or lack thereof unfolds in those who have been the victims of violent crime. Specifically, one could investigate the role of forgiveness in one's experience of coping with violent crime.

One could incorporate factors such as the perception of control, feelings of insecurity, one's sense of self and how one is experienced in relation to others following an incident in which one is criminally victimized. In addition, it would also be interesting to explore the way in which victims see perpetrators and themselves and how this impacts on the capacity to forgive.

2.1.2 The Therapeutic Effect of Forgiveness: Intervention Research

Intervention research on forgiveness aims to investigate the therapeutic efficacy of forgiveness as a primary goal for intervention. These studies argue that interventions with the primary goal of forgiveness are as beneficial as other therapeutic modalities and forgiveness is therefore psychologically healing. Freedman and Enright (1996) implemented and evaluated a forgiveness intervention with 12 incest survivors. A yoked, randomised experimental and control group was used, in which random assignment of subjects took place. Pairs of participants were matched according to various dimensions such as the nature of the abuse and the abuser. One participant from each pair was then randomly assigned to the experimental group, which received the intervention first and the other only undergoing treatment after the first participant completed the program. The control group was a waiting list control who had contact with experimenter once a month. The instruments used included the Psychological Profile of Forgiveness Scale (Hebl and Enright, 1993), the State Trait Anxiety Inventory (Spielberger, Gorsuch, Lushene, Vagg and Jacobs (1983), the Beck Depression Inventory, the Coopersmith Self-esteem Inventory (1981 as cited in Freedman and Enright, 1996) and the Hope Scale (Al-Mabuk, 1996 as cited in Freedman and Enright, 1996). Results revealed that the

experimental group, which received the forgiveness intervention, experienced greater increases in forgiveness than the control group, in addition to a greater increase on hope measures and lower anxiety and depression scores than the control group. The study demonstrated sound design in terms of internal validity with the use of a control group and random assignment of subjects. However, generalisability is questionable due to the small sample size and the specific nature of the sample. For instance, these findings have not yet been investigated with unknown perpetrators. The information derived from the study is precise but intervention studies do not reveal the in-depth dynamics of how forgiveness occurs in every day life or reveal under which conditions it is most likely to occur (Fow, 1996). In addition the victim's actual experience of forgiveness as a psychological process was not explored.

Hebl and Enright (1993) conducted a psychotherapeutic intervention with forgiveness as the goal. The sample consisted of 24 elderly females (mean age = 74.5) selected from a Christian church community located in a middle class area. The goal of therapy was to forgive an individual who had inflicted considerable psychological hurt, as judged by the client. Patients were randomly assigned to a condition and control group. The forgiveness group followed a treatment model based on Enright and the Human Development Study Group (1991 as cited in Enright et al. 1994). The psychological variables engaged in the process intervention for forgiveness are as follows: (1) Examination of psychological defences, (2) Confrontation of anger, (3) Admittance of shame when appropriate, (4) Awareness of cathexis, (5) Awareness of cognitive rehearsal/rumination of the offence, (6) Insight that the injured party may be comparing

self with the injurer, (7) Insight into a possibly altered 'just world' view, (8) A change of heart/new insights that old resolution strategies are not working, (9) Commitment to forgive the offender, (10) Reframing, through role taking, who the wrongdoer is by viewing him or her in context, (11) Empathy toward the offender, (12) Awareness of compassion as it emerges toward the offender, (13) Acceptance and absorption of the pain, (14) Realization that self has needed others forgiveness in the past, (15) Realization that perhaps one has been permanently changed by the injury, (16) Awareness of decreased negative affect and perhaps increased positive affect toward the offender and (17) Awareness of internal emotional release. The variables measured included the client's self-esteem, forgiveness, psychological depression and anxiety. The intervention was conducted over a period of eight weeks. Following the intervention it was found that the experimental group showed a stronger pattern of forgiveness than the control group at post-test. However, it was found that both groups had significantly lower scores on depression and state-trait anxiety. The results suggest that forgiveness seems to be as beneficial in bringing about psychological healing (as measured by the decrease in depression and anxiety and an increase in self-esteem) as other therapeutic modalities, which are more widely accepted and acknowledged.

There are a number of explanations concerning the therapeutic effects of forgiveness. According to Wapnick (1985) forgiveness presents a means to challenge an individual's distorted ways of thinking and perceiving others, thereby releasing the individual from excessive guilt, anger and other dysfunctional patterns that result from the cognitive distortions. Often this cognitive distortion prevents individuals from making meaning of

their experience, while forgiveness allows for a shift in thinking about an event. However, this study assumes cause and effect, implying that forgiveness results in a breaking down of cognitive distortions. An alternative hypothesis could be that an individual's distorted ways of thinking about and perceiving oneself and others determines whether he/she will forgive or not. Consequently, in order to investigate this question it is necessary to investigate the role of forgiveness and unforgiveness following a hurtful event in order to determine whether a shift does indeed occur.

Fitzgibbons (1986) and Hope (1987) observed that clients who forgive, often benefit from a simultaneous decrease in anger, depression, anxiety and related symptoms. In addition, it was discovered by Brandsma (1982) that when a client remains resentful towards a perceived offender the anger could escalate, resulting in additional psychological problems whereas forgiveness can reverse this trend. In addition, Doyle (1999) states that psychotherapists are well aware of the maladaptive responses and regression of human growth that is caused by injury from others. Doyle (1999) asserts that a resolution of the emotional harm, often through some form of forgiveness, is a core criterion for the termination of therapy. This raises the question of cause and effect. For instance, does forgiveness bring about a decrease in anger and resentment or does the decrease in anger and resentment allow space for forgiveness? Consequently, the way in which these two variables interact and operate needs to be illuminated as well as the possibility of the involvement of other variables. For instance, from an Object Relations Theory perspective, how does one's representations of oneself and others impact on this process of healing? In addition, this study investigated the healing properties of

forgiveness within a therapeutic context, however failed to give insight into the non-therapeutic context or the lived experience of forgiveness in everyday life.

A number of assumptions have arisen from this intervention research. Gassin and Enright (1995) argue that forgiveness is a marker of positive psychological adjustment if one is able to find meaning in the process subsequent to the experience of pain and loss. Here again one needs to consider the problem of cause and effect as well as the possibility of other variables. Secondly, unforgiveness is associated with high levels of retaliation, justification, revenge and seeing others as responsible for one's pain. Therefore the victim's perception of the perpetrator influences his/her capacity for forgiveness. In the absence of forgiveness it is likely that the victim will harbour feelings of revenge and hatred, contributing toward a continuous cycle of violence (Madikizela, 2002), whereas forgiveness holds the potential to impede this vicious cycle. This is due to the fact that one is able to let go of burdensome and destructive emotions such as anger and revenge, which harm others as well as oneself. Consequently, forgiveness prevents the transgression from continually damaging one's self-esteem and psyche as well as bringing to an end the distortion and corruption of one's relations with others (Gartner 1988 as cited in Doyle 1999). Thirdly, according to Madikizela (2002) forgiveness enables one to regain self-respect by giving the victim control over something that the perpetrator needs. It would be interesting to investigate these explanations and hypotheses through the use of in-depth psychological research.

Intervention research has shed some light on the therapeutic benefits of forgiveness within the therapeutic context and has provided further theories as to why forgiveness is healing. However, many of these studies focus solely on the therapeutic context without extending to the everyday world, thereby not reflecting adequately the phenomenon of forgiveness and how it is experienced in the real world. In addition, these studies suggest a difference in dependent and independent variables assuming that forgiveness causes psychological healing without considering the alternative hypothesis that psychological health may be the determining factor in the presence or absence of forgiveness.

Furthermore, they do not seem to consider the possibility of a third variable, which may influence or mediate the relationship between health and forgiveness. For instance, a third variable may serve to enhance both forgiveness and health simultaneously or it may influence the strength of the relationship between these two variables.

2.1.3 Psychological Variables Related to Forgiveness

A number of researchers recognised common factors in forgiveness and aimed at investigating or locating the main ingredient in the capacity for forgiveness. Specifically, these studies focussed on the role of empathy, humanisation, attributions linked to the offender's confession and variables related to the relationship between the offender and the victim.

The Role of Empathy

McCullough, Worthington and Rachal (1997) conducted a study based on the hypothesis that people forgive others to the extent that they experience empathy for them. Two studies were implemented in order to test this hypothesis. Study one (N=239) involved

the development of measures of empathy and forgiveness. Participants were given a number of questionnaires to complete, measuring (a) demographic and offence related information (b) the perceived degree of apology, (c) affective empathy (d) forgiving, (e) forgiveness related items, (f) conciliatory behaviour toward the offender and (g) avoidance behaviour toward the offender. Results of the study revealed that (1) the relationship between receiving an apology from and forgiving one's offender is a function of increasing empathy for the offender and (2) forgiveness is positively related to conciliatory behaviour and negatively related to avoidance behaviour toward the offending partner. Study two (N=143) involved an intervention, in which empathy was manipulated in order to examine the relationship between empathy and forgiveness more precisely. A three (condition) * three (time) randomised block design with repeated measures was used. The three conditions included an empathy seminar, a comparison seminar and a waiting list control. Measurements were taken before the seminar, after the seminar and 6 weeks following the seminar. Findings generally supported the conceptualisation of forgiving as a motivational phenomenon in that "empathy facilitated a set of motivational changes that is structurally and functionally similar to the relationship between empathy and altruistic motivation to help people who are in need" (McCullough et al. 1997). The empathy-forgiveness link was also supported as the empathy seminar promoted more change in forgiving than did the comparison seminar and waiting list control group. In addition, it was found that the notion that dispositional relationships and situational factors including the therapeutic context influences forgiving by facilitating empathy for the perpetrator in an offending relationship. Weiner (1993) suggests that both empathy and forgiveness are the result of attributional change or a shift in thinking about the

perpetrator and the situation. In addition, empathy may contribute to forgiveness through an attempt to understand the context or whole person who has inflicted the pain (Fitzgibbons, 1986).

The above studies demonstrate sound internal validity as well as adequate sample sizes. However, the relationship postulated above is rather simplistic, as it is unlikely that forgiveness is solely a function of empathy as there may be other mediating and moderating variables, which influence this relationship. Worthington (1998), in a later theoretical paper, asserted that empathy on its own is not sufficient to bring about forgiveness and that the additional component of humility is necessary. Humility involves seeing oneself as fallible and equally in need of forgiveness. In addition, it is also important to consider underlying intrapsychic factors, which predispose individuals to be more likely to experience empathy as well as forgive. However, this does not seem to invalidate the importance of empathy in the process of forgiveness, but suggests that empathy itself is diverse and connected to other factors. In addition, the above study pertains only to close interpersonal relationships. Consequently, the question lies open as to whether the findings are true for different types of relationships, for instance relationships in which the offender and victim may be strangers. Furthermore, this link occurs in the context of a therapeutic setting, raising questions about its relevance to a 'real world' context in the absence of therapeutic intervention.

A fuller understanding of empathy may illuminate the link between the phenomenon and forgiveness. Lauffer (1971, as cited in Keen, 1975) conducted a phenomenological investigation into the process of empathy. He interviewed 20 college students for

approximately one and a half hours each. The interview involved a task, in which participants were requested to select who they would assist from a series of eight minority group families, who were in some sort of difficulty. The investigator listened to each interview several times in order to articulate an understanding of each participant's world structure. Upon reflection it became apparent that one of the central features of an empathetic person is one who is able to experience another's perspective. This seems fairly consistent with the definition of empathy. However, further exploration revealed that the ability or inability to experience empathy depends on the structure of one's lived world. "Empathic being in the world can be described as multi-centered, having other centers of meaning and origins of motivation that are nearly as vivid as oneself" (Keen, 1975, p. 49). This view implies a respect for others as well as an awareness of other's capacity to experience pain, anxiety and other human emotions is part of the way in which one typically relates to the world. Consequently, one is able to anticipate and conceptualise a strong connection between the capacity to experience forgiveness and to feel empathy, both being part of one's personality makeup. The connection between forgiveness and empathy has been investigated with the use of positivist research designs, contributing only skeletal data to the understanding of the relation. In order to obtain a fuller understanding of this connection a more qualitative detailed paradigm is required. This may provide richer, more in-depth data required to explore the workings and dynamics of the forgiveness process and its relationship to the attribute of empathy.

The Role of Rehumanisation

Madikizela (2002) offers a further suggestion for the empathy/forgiveness link by bringing in the concept of rehumanisation. Forgiveness necessitates the rehumanisation of the perpetrator from his or her original position as demonic or pure evil. "Seeing the other as a human being, feeling and responding to the other's pain, is probably the most crucial starting point in the encounter between victims and perpetrators of evil" (Madikizela, 2002, p. 20). Empathy enables the victim to recognize and acknowledge the perpetrator's pain, even in the midst of tragedy, because pain cannot be evil. In this way empathy deepens one's own humanity and awareness of humanity. Its absence signals the separation of human beings from one another and is an assault on the essence of what it is to be human" (Madikizela, 2002, p. 20). It is important to note that the word 'rehumanisation' implies some sort of shift in perception, which is consistent with the majority of other studies cited. However, it is important to consider the possibility that forgiveness and empathy may be associated with the attribute of humanising others rather than dehumanising them.

The Role Relationship Level Variables

McCullough et al's (1997) study was extended and elaborated by McCullough, Rachal, Sandage, Worthington, Brown and Hight (1998). In this investigation four separate studies were conducted in order to examine the extent to which forgiving could be predicted with relationship level variables (satisfaction, commitment and closeness), offence level variables (apology and the impact of the offence) and social cognitive variables (offender focused empathy and rumination about the offence). Findings

revealed that forgiveness appears to be significantly correlated with dyadic satisfaction and commitment, meaning that the more committed and satisfied both partners are in a close interpersonal relationship, the more likely it is that both parties will be forgiving toward one another. In addition, it was found that the data supported two independent models of the relationship amongst the variables. Model 1 demonstrates links between closeness-apology-empathy-forgiveness. This model shows the high correlation of pre-offence closeness, apology, empathy and forgiveness. The results show that in close relationships transgressors are more likely to offer apologies for their actions and victims are more likely to develop empathy for their transgressors when their relationship is close. Secondly, model 2 demonstrates links between intrusiveness of thoughts/rumination-revenge sequence. This revealed that rumination about the offence tends to predict revenge motivations, meaning that the more one ruminates about the offence, the more likely is one's desire to seek revenge against the offending party. This study demonstrated sound internal validity and reliability with adequate sample sizes. In addition the number of variables investigated indicates a less simplistic relationship of the dynamics of forgiveness. It has been suggested by McCullough et al (1998) that the construct of forgiveness is multi-factorial. However, the information elicited pertains primarily to close interpersonal relationships. It would therefore be interesting to investigate whether some of the variables in this study, such as rumination, pertain to relationships in which the parties are not close. For instance, how does the process of forgiveness unfold where there is no dyadic satisfaction or commitment between the two parties as in stranger to stranger relationships? Furthermore, the use of single item measures of forgiveness or self-report measures may be problematic, as it has been

shown clearly that differing levels of forgiveness exist as well as pseudo-forgiveness (Pingleton, 1997), which the subject may be unaware of. Consequently, many studies assume forgiveness to be categorical where in fact there is evidence that it may exist along a continuum. In addition, it is important to elicit a richer store of information from the participant, in order to assess an individual's experience of forgiveness in context and the role of other variables which may influence the relationship between the offender and the victim. For instance some research (which will be reviewed within this section) has investigated the role of intrapsychic factors in the forgiveness process. These factors, such as unconscious processes and defences within the individual, may influence the relationship between forgiveness and relationship level variables.

The Role of Confession

Weiner, Graham, Peter and Zmuidinas (1991) conducted an experimental study composed of several experiments, in which the effects of confession by offenders on forgiveness were examined. In experiment one, 125 students from the University of California, Los Angeles were tested in groups ranging from 9 to 20 participants in each group. Each participant was presented with a vignette that described a charged individual, who either confessed or denied personal responsibility, while in the control group no information about the person's response was given. In addition, the charged individual was either of high status or low status. Results revealed that confessions suspend the presumption that bad acts are performed by inferior people. In addition, causal attributions about the crime were less internal and controllable, meaning that when perpetrators confessed to a crime, the participants are less likely to see the crime as

emanating from within the individual's moral character and more likely to see the perpetrator as a victim of circumstance, thereby increasing the likelihood of forgiveness. This seems consistent with research proposing the importance of empathy in forgiveness. Individuals who are more empathetic to their offenders are more likely to make external and uncontrollable attributions about their offenders. However, the opposite may also be true, where one's attributions influence one's capacity for empathy.

In the second experiment (N=72) the same researchers investigated the role of a change in perception toward the offender or denier. Subjects were presented with vignettes similar to experiment one. After reading the vignette subjects responded to nine questions. The questions related to the offender's traits, emotional reactions of anger and sympathy, forgiveness, behaviour toward the offender and the offender's feelings of guilt. All ratings were made on eight-point scales. Following the ratings, participants were randomly assigned to 3 groups varying in confession type (confession, act denial and control). These findings supported the results of experiment one and two, which demonstrated that confession alters prior opinions by enhancing character inferences and decreasing negative affect toward the offender. Consequently, confession by the perpetrator facilitates a change in perception towards the offender as someone with higher moral substance and as a victim of circumstance, thereby enhancing the likelihood of forgiveness. Links with empathy research are evident here. However, it is not clear why or how these changes in perception occur.

The next experiment (n=65, 32 males, 33 females) examined the difference between spontaneous confessions as opposed to confession following an accusation. Results revealed that a spontaneous confession is perceived as more trustworthy and moral, thereby eliciting greater sympathy and forgiveness. The data suggests that the presence and type of confession alter perceptions of the perpetrator's moral character and causal attributions for the negative action. The study demonstrates a comprehensive investigation of the role of confession in forgiveness. However, it is important to note that one cannot assume a causal relationship between confession and forgiveness, as other variables may play contributing or mediating roles in the process. In addition, even if causality was implicated, the question of the exact pathway remains unanswered.

Weiner et al's (1991) study investigates the nature of forgiveness using an attribution theory framework in non-close personal relationships, which sheds new light on the psychology of forgiveness. It seems that a similar shift in thinking, as in the empathy study, is assumed to underlie forgiveness. However, it is yet to be explored how these two theories are linked. Here again psychodynamic research may shed some light on the topic. It may be useful to examine in more detail the underlying (or psychodynamic) factors, which contribute toward a shift in cognition toward the offender. Furthermore, this study approaches forgiveness as a purely scientific phenomenon, while neglecting its social aspect, thereby not allowing space for the process of forgiveness to reveal itself from the data but imposing its hypothesized constructs. In addition, this research has relied upon hypothetical situations rather than real life events and the experience of the subjects. Subjects were expected to think about how they would react given a certain

scenario rather than giving an account of their actual experience and behaviour of forgiveness.

Other Variables

Girard and Mullet (1997) presented 236 subjects between the ages of 15 and 96, with 64 scenarios involving an interpersonal transgression. Once the subject had read the scenarios, they were requested to indicate the probability that they would forgive the transgressor if they were the victim in the scenario. 6 variables were manipulated in the 64 scenarios that accounted for 70 % of the variance in participants' ratings. Variables found to correlate with forgiveness included: (a) intimacy of the relationship between the offender and the victim, (b) the intentionality of the transgression (c) the severity of the consequences, (d) the extent to which the transgressor apologized, (e) the attitude of a significant other regarding whether the offended should forgive and (f) whether the consequences of the transgression persisted. This study considers a wider range of variables and therefore creates a more realistic picture of forgiveness. However, the way in which these variables interact within an individual remains vague. It would be useful to explore these variables in greater detail. In addition, the study relies on hypothetical situations and responses rather than the participant's experience of forgiveness. Consequently, subjects may give socially desirable responses or be unaware of how they would react given a real life situation. Furthermore, the scenarios presented to participants involve interpersonal relationships, where the victim and offender know each other. It would be beneficial therefore to explore these variables within the context of stranger to stranger relationships.

2.1.4 The Process of Forgiveness

Research on the process of forgiveness has been approached from a number of different view points, each aiming to identify a progressive course individuals undergo in the journey toward forgiveness.

Matthew and Dennis Linn (1978) added a major contribution to the understanding of the forgiveness process. They observed, from their own patients, that the five stages of the death and dying process described by Elizabeth Kubler-Ross (1969) could also be applied to the process of forgiveness. The stages are as follows: (1) Denial: The individual does not admit that they were ever hurt. Defence mechanisms such as denial, reaction formation and idealization come into play here. (2) Anger: The individual blames the other for hurting and trying to destroy the self. (3) Bargaining: Conditions are set up to be fulfilled before the individual will forgive. (4) Depression: Blame is turned inward toward the self for letting hurt destroy the self and (5) Acceptance: The self is accepted and others are forgiven. The self also repents for hurting others. Although this observation provides a fascinating and reasonable account of the forgiveness process, it has not yet been tested empirically.

Enright and the Human Development Study Group (1991 as cited in Enright et al. 1994) proposed a general pathway that people follow when they forgive. The model was first rationally derived and presented to hundreds of individuals for the purposes of feedback. Minor revision followed the feedback in order to devise an educational application of the model to test its effectiveness in bringing about forgiveness in people hurt by injustices. The model is composed of four phases namely, uncovering, decision, work and

deepening, each with distinct sub-processes (Human Development Study Group, 1994). The Human Development Study Group proposed a 17-unit process/formula to be used for the purposes of intervention, which is not suggested to be exhaustive. It is important to note that forgiveness is a lengthy process, requiring the individual to work through a number of issues. Unit 1 is characterized by the injured individual's attempt to distance him/herself from emotional pain. This is followed by an expression of anger, which is no longer denied. Thirdly, there is an admittance of shame in situations where this is appropriate. Subsequently, it is common for the victim to invest large amounts of emotional and cognitive energy into the event as well as reliving the event in one's mind (Unit 4 and 5). Thereafter the injured party may compare him or herself to the offender (unit 6), which may lead to a new theory of life, which is characterized as unfair. In the next phase the victim may choose among alternative courses of action, one being to forgive the offender (unit 9). In Unit 10, the victim may choose to reframe the situation (may be automatic), which involves putting the wrongdoer's actions in perspective and viewing the offender in the context of his/her pressures and developmental history. This may result in enhanced empathy (unit 11) and compassion (unit 12) for the offender. This may lead to a realization of the offender's pain (unit 13). Unit 14 involves the victim's realization of his or her own need for forgiveness. This may be followed by the victim's realization that he or she has been permanently changed by the event (unit 15). Subsequently, the offended individual may feel a decrease in negative affect and perhaps an increase in positive affect toward the offender (unit 16) and a resultant internal emotional release (unit 17) (The Human Development Study Group, 1994).

The Human Development Study Group (1991) provides a useful framework for understanding forgiveness as a process and provides one with different stages in which forgiveness is suggested to occur, but it is important to question the universality of the proposed forgiveness process. In addition, the validity of the results may be called into question as subjects gave feedback on the a proposed process/formula of forgiveness which was presented to them by the researchers, rather than describing their own experience of forgiveness. It would therefore prove useful to explore their experience of forgiveness without imposing a ready-made forgiveness process formulation upon them. A further limitation of this study is that it does not explore the process or dynamics by which these units or phases becomes possible.

The research cited above has served to provide an outline or formula of stages of forgiveness, however have not supplied a fundamental understanding of how this process is experienced. Therefore more in-depth data and investigation are required in order to obtain a richer or fuller understanding of the forgiveness process. As can be seen in the following studies, the phenomenological method seems to meet this need sufficiently.

Phenomenological Investigation: The Meaning of Forgiveness

Fow (1988 as cited in Fow, 1996) conducted an empirical-phenomenological study, in which six participants provided written descriptions of a situation in which they forgave another individual, followed by interviews to elicit further information. Interviews involved non-interpretive questions such as “could you tell me more about what that meant for you?” Analysis of these elaborated descriptions, focusing on defining common constituents and variations were integrated into a general structure, which attempted to

“express the fundamental meaning of forgiving as it was experienced by participants in the study” (Fow, 1996, p.220). Three specific themes emerged out of the study in the process of forgiveness. (1) A movement toward forgiving (an individual is prompted to embark on forgiveness due to an experience of things not being resolved), (2) transformation of meaning (this involves a shift in or expansion in understanding of the situation and the other and (3) reconciliation (there is a possibility of forgiveness without reconciling).

The circumstances for forgiveness arise when one is angered or hurt as the result of the violation by another. The possibility for forgiving begins when the violation begins to be experienced as unresolved. The obsessional rumination over the event and offence does not allow one to move on. The second phase of forgiveness, termed transformation of meaning (Droll, 1984), involves ‘contracting new truth from the past.’ This explains the enhanced understanding of the other, which occurs in the process of forgiveness. This includes a broader appreciation of the offender’s motives, needs and reasons for the violation. Consequently, one begins to gain a new perspective on the event or a change in the way in which it is understood. This is done by identification with the other or considering the context in which the offender acted. The perpetrator is not excused from responsibility but the meaning of the violation is altered to the extent that it is no longer the sole determinant of one’s feelings toward the other. “The critical dimension of forgiving is that one experiences a shift in one’s understanding of and relationship to the other person, oneself and the world...there is an experience of reclaiming oneself, which at the same time, involves a shift into a larger perspective” (Fow, 1996, p.228).

Truong (1991 as cited in Sells and Hargrave, 1998) conducted a phenomenological study, which involved 15 adults, who claimed to have been able to forgive. Twelve common themes and three distinct phases emerged from the analyses of the interviews. The first phase is known as the management phase, which consists of (a) identification, (b) expression of negative feelings, (c) detachment and assessment, (d) support and spirituality, (e) acceptance and (f) decision making and goal setting. Secondly, the transformation phase includes (g) action, (h) understanding, (i) letting go and (j) engaging. Finally, the resultant phase involves (k) reconciliation and (l) growth. This study supports a number of previous findings including the importance of letting go and empathy.

Summary Table of Process Research

The table below is an attempt to portray the phases of forgiveness according to the four studies, for the purposes of comparison. From the table it is clear that each of the above studies on the process of forgiveness seem to show distinct similarities with some being more detailed than others. It appears that in the beginning stages following a transgression the victim at first attempts to deny or distance him/herself from the pain or offender followed by an expression of anger. The following stage seems to be a work phase, in which much cognitive and emotional energy is expended on dealing with feelings of anger and guilt. This activity is then followed by a dampening phase in which one feels despair and finally there seems to be a decision phase followed by a movement towards forgiveness through understanding and acceptance.

| Enright and the Human Development study group (1991) | Death and dying (Linn 1978) | Fow (1996) | Truong (1991 as cited in Sells and Hargrave, 1998) |
|---|------------------------------------|---------------------------|---|
| 1. Distancing | Denial | | Identification |
| 2. Expression of anger | Anger | Movement toward forgiving | Expression of negative feelings |
| 3. Admit shame | Bargaining | | |
| 4. Emotional energy | | | |
| 5. Rumination | | | |
| 6. Compare self to offender | | | |
| 7. New theory of life | | | |
| 8. Life seen as unfair | Decision making and goal setting | | |
| 9. Choose to or not to forgive | | | |
| 10. Reframing | Acceptance | Transformation of meaning | Action and understanding |
| 11. Empathy | | | |
| 12. Compassion | | | |
| 13. Recognizing offenders pain | | | |
| 14. Realization of ones own need for forgiveness | | | |
| 15. Realization that life is permanently changed | | | |
| 16. Positive affect toward offender | | | |
| 17. Emotional release | | | |

These studies attempt to gain greater insight into the process of forgiveness. However, researchers elicited information that “focused solely on hurt inflicted by someone in an interpersonal relationship” (Rowe, Halling, DaVries, Liefer, Powers and van Bronkhorst, (1989, p.223). Rowe et al. (1989) “call for research into other forgiveness contexts, for instance when one is hurt by an unknown other...” (p. 223). In addition, subjects were requested to recall a specific instance in which they forgave. It would be useful to question participants concerning a specific instance in which they were hurt by another, followed by an enquiry into the presence or absence of forgiveness. In doing this, the researcher is not limited to isolated or biased instances, in which an individual has had the capacity to forgive but rather it frees the researcher to examine a wider range of variables and dynamics in the forgiveness/unforgiveness process.

Rowe et al. (1989) argue that past research on forgiveness contains significant insights, however lacks psychological concreteness and theory and although they often make clarifying distinctions, few of them indicate what forgiveness really is. They do not provide a coherent sense of the phenomenon as a whole.

Rowe, Halling, DaVries, Liefer, Powers and van Bronkhorst, (1989) conducted a phenomenological analysis of forgiving another based on a series of interviews. Participants were requested to give an account of the process of forgiveness within a significant interpersonal relationship. They argue that forgiveness is a process that begins when one perceives oneself as harmed by another and ends in a psychological reconciliation with the one who was perceived as hurtful. They discovered two

dimensions of forgiving. Firstly, the process is usually interpersonal in nature and occurs in the context of a specific event and/or relationship involving another, who has deeply affected one in a hurtful way. Secondly, the experience of forgiveness is often transpersonal or spiritual in nature. They found that the need for forgiveness arises when one experiences a fundamental disruption to the wholeness or integrity of one's life. Initially there is a tearing of the fabric of one's life or one's world. "The injury that involves forgiving is one that violates a persons identity" (p.237). One feels uprooted or off center. Relationships to the world are characterized by distance and disorder, especially with respect to the injuring person. There is a belief that one is the target of the offender's unjust and demeaning behaviour. The ongoing experience of hurt entails a preoccupation with the injury. This is followed by the experience of anger, which Rowe et al (1989) describe as a movement towards the offender at least in one's imagination. The possibility of forgiving seems impossible at this point. This is followed by an ambivalent phase in which one is torn between letting go and holding on. Subsequently, a phase follows in which there is a willingness to forgive and a desire to experience resolution. Forgiveness is then experienced as a revelation and is often seen as a gift. Rowe et al. (1989) state " The critical dimension of forgiving is that one experiences a shift in one's understanding of and relationship to the other person, oneself and the world." (p. 242). This study provides a rich understanding of the essence of forgiveness, however focussed solely on forgiveness within a close interpersonal relationship.

2.1.5 Forgiveness and Personality

Personality is generally accepted to be a relatively stable and enduring way in which an individual relates to his/her world. This would suggest that if forgiveness is a personality trait, an individual who does not possess this trait would find it very difficult to forgive. This seems to provide a differing perspective to the theories which view forgiveness as some sort of state, rather than a more pervasive trait. Walker and Gorsuch (2002) examined the relationship of personality and forgiving others, using a sample of 180 (137 females and 43 males) students from religious and public universities. They hypothesized that the experience of forgiveness might be influenced by personality variables by enabling some individuals to experience pro-forgiveness relational styles, cognitions and affect. The measure of personality used was one designed by Goldberg (2000 as cited in Walker and Gorsuch, 2002), which incorporates both the big five model and Cattell's 16 PF. Forgiveness was measured using a 38 item scale from McCullough et al (1997). The findings indicated that forgiveness is significantly related to the measures of agreeableness and neuroticism versus emotional stability. Agreeableness is a personality trait that consists of traits such as altruism, empathy, care and generosity. Emotional stability suggests that one has low vulnerability to experiences of negative emotion. These individuals are more likely to forgive and less likely to be exploitative towards others (McCullough, 2001). In addition, neuroticism is associated with avoidance behaviour and negative affect. This would suggest that some people are more predisposed or inclined to forgive than others, based on their personality traits.

This study provides an accurate and convincing account of the relationship between personality variables and forgiveness. However, it fails to provide information or demonstrate how personality traits and forgiveness are related. An interesting step for future research investigating the link between forgiveness and personality traits would be to explore the psychological process and mechanisms of individuals who forgive compared to those who do not. A specific theory of personality is required in order to explain this link. An appropriate theoretical framework would be Object Relations Theory (ORT). This theory does not deal specifically with personality traits, but is able to provide an in-depth explanation of the working of traits, with the use of intrapsychic processes.

2.1.6 Psychodynamic Object Relations Perspective

Several theoretical perspectives attempt to explain the phenomenon of forgiveness. One such theory, namely Object Relations Theory provides a comprehensive and convincing account. The literature on object relations and forgiveness is largely theoretical in nature, with only a few case studies. A number of Object Relation's theorists have attempted to make sense or speculate about the phenomenon of forgiveness (Doyle, 1999; Gartner, 1992; Hunter, 1978; Kernberg, 1992; Klein, 1964; Pingleton, 1997; and Vitz and Mango, 1997) offering a comprehensive understanding from their theory of development and personality.

Object Relations theorists are primarily concerned with the nature and origins of human relationships. An object is “ a person or thing in an individual's external environment,

which becomes internally or psychologically significant” (St. Clair, 1995, p.7). Object relations are the feelings and mental images, which become associated with the object. According to ORT, early interpersonal relationships build an internal store of rich images, which operate as psychological structures in the mind and shape how an individual’s personality relates to the world (St. Clair, 1995). Consequently, Object Relations Theory asserts that the building up of past relationships shape a person’s present relationships. In contrast to the earlier work of Freud, an individual’s primary motivation does not derive from the need to satisfy instincts and drives but rather from seeking relationships (St. Clair, 1995). During the first few months and years of an infant’s life, inner psychological structures begin to form, which enable the infant to relate to others outside itself, in addition to creating a sense of itself as self. According to St. Clair (1995), ORT is not a systematic school of thought but rather a living body of ideas and notions. Many of the terms have been borrowed from Freud, but ideas and insights have been adapted to a large extent creating a number of differing threads within the original ORT. A number of theorists can be grouped under the broad title of Object Relations Theorists including Fairburn, Winnicott, Guntrip, Klein, and Mahler as well as the self-psychologist Kohut. These theorists believe that the ‘psychological birthing process’ takes place as relationships with external objects are internalised or taken in to form the internal structures of the personality. Therefore, in order to study one’s personality one must study the history of an individual’s past personal relationships with their significant others.

Hunter (1978) outlined the intrapsychic functions involved in the process of forgiveness using his own experience with patients. He found in his experience as a psychotherapist that during the course of psychotherapy, there is a marked reduction in bitterness and resentment on the part of the patient towards those persons which he or she had previously held responsible for his/her sufferings. This shift is accompanied by (a) a less ego-centric or narcissistic view of the world and increased capacity to form new relationships or modify old ones and (b) improved reality testing. He argued that emerging empathy for the offender is seen to be possible as greater self-object differentiation occurs. This results in finer distinctions of real similarities and differences, as opposed to traits defensively introjected and projected between the victim and offender. It is interesting to contrast this with some of the literature cited above as it sees empathy as a result rather than as a determining factor. Furthermore, these refined realistic, internal representations contribute to a greater acceptance of oneself and one's perpetrator. He also highlights the difference between forgetting and repressing arguing that forgetting allows the victim to let go while repressing keeps one imprisoned.

According to Gartner (1988 as cited in Doyle, 1999) the inability to forgive originates from the working of primitive defences, particularly splitting. According to Klein (1964) at approximately 4 months an infant will pass through a stage of development called the paranoid schizoid position. During this stage the infant experiences two conflicting emotions towards the mother, one of gratification when satisfied and comforted, leading to erotic feelings and one of frustration if the breast is unavailable, leading to feelings of aggression. Through the primitive defence of splitting, the infant experiences the

gratifying and frustrating breasts as two separate objects, sometimes described by Klein (1964) as good and bad breasts. The fundamental fear is that hate, death, evil and destruction will overwhelm and destroy the loving and good aspects of the self and the good breast. Therefore the infant must adopt a method of reducing the anxiety inherent in hating the object that gives him or her life (Vitz and Mango, 1997). The infant achieves this by employing the defences of splitting and projection. Through splitting, the infant maintains the false view that it is not the idealized good breast, which frustrates him/her, but some other devalued breast. Further, through projection the infant rids him/her self of his or her own aggressive feelings by attributing them to that same bad object. If conditions for development are optimal the infant will gradually develop a more integrated and realistic view of him/her self and others by re-owning his or her own projected aggression. This leads to feelings of guilt for his/her acknowledged aggression and aggression toward the mother. Consequently, the phase called the depressive position is initiated. However, if the infant's experiences of aggression and deprivation are too intense, integration is not possible and often psychopathology may result (Vitz and Mango, 1997).

Kernberg (1980) differs somewhat in his explanation of early development. He suggests that splitting occurs in the second year of life, during the period of separation-individuation after the separation of self and object representations have been established. Furthermore, Kernberg (1980) clarified the existence of good self, bad self, good object and bad object representations, where the distinction between these by Klein (1955 as cited in Doyle, 1999) appeared unclear. Kernberg (1992) asserts that the dividing line

between character pathology and higher-level functioning is determined by the integration of good and bad object representations. “To understand and experience oneself and others as full complicated human beings with good and bad qualities is the road to health. On the other hand, stereotyped and extreme devalued or idealized views is the mark of illness.” (Gartner, 1988 as cited in Doyle, 1999, p.23).

Klein (1955 as cited in Doyle, 1999) asserts that primitive defence actions can occur in more structured egos if strained sufficiently by abuse or trauma. In this way more developed psyches could regress to states that resemble character pathologies. This is thought to occur as the traumatic event may revive unconsciously held bad objects bringing about internal representations that are pathologically primitive. The ego is thought to be frozen at this time, as the individual wrestles with the infantile experience of rejection again. In order to prevent disintegration the ego then splits creating a more manageable although distorted representation of the self and perpetrator.

Consistent with ORT, Vitz and Mango (1997) argue that forgiveness is not always authentic and that an obstruction can occur through the working of psychological defences, which cause forgiveness to be superficial, incomplete and retarded (Pingleton, 1997). These defences include narcissistic condensation (attitude of moral superiority), denial (where one forgives without direct confrontation of hatred for another), reaction formation (where one forgives with a forced positive attitude and affection which serves to cover the repressed hatred), undoing (in which forgiveness is used as a way to escape guilt based on the rationale that one is undoing the harm that is already done), neurotic

dependency (where forgiveness serves to maintain psychological dependency on someone), symbiosis (in which the individual's attempts to ward deep anxieties concerning abandonment), and manipulative use of power (in which forgiveness is used to force the other to admit guilt or wrongdoing). According to Vitz and Mango (1997) splitting and projection are psychological defences which present major obstacles to forgiveness in that an accurate perception of reality is compromised and an external world of persecutory bad objects is created from whom the individual fears attack and retaliation.

Vitz and Mango (1997) used Kleinian psychodynamics to describe and explain the dynamics of hatred as a defence mechanism and a major barrier to forgiveness and to psychological health. "Hatred's extreme resistance to change is explained as due to its function as a defence against narcissistic injury" (Vitz and Mango, 1997, p.64). "Hatred defends one against the source of memory and thus against a depressing, humiliating or inadequate past, hatred protects one from the risk of intimate relationships, it creates the benefits of sick role and self pity, it defends one's unrealistic ego ideals and moral pride and it permits the pleasures of moral superiority" (Vitz and Mango, 1997, p.64).

Pingleton (1997) applied the Theory of Object Relations to the understanding of why people do not forgive. He offers a psychodynamic understanding of how and why individuals may become pathologically resistant to or fixated in the forgiveness process. He states that true forgiveness is very difficult to achieve and very few individuals do achieve it. "We humans stumble at the task, often refusing to forgive or forgiving partially at best" (Beck, 1995, p.269). The ability to forgive is cultivated, acquired or

developed within one's personality structure rather than being an innate part of one's personality. Unfortunately no major system of personality theory directly addresses this indispensable...topic of human forgiveness" (Pingleton, 1997, p. 406). Few authors have focused attention on the problems involved in forgiving others, such as when the offender is unavailable or unwilling to participate in the forgiveness process (Smedes, 1984), certain types of false or pseudo-forgiveness (Enright and Zell, 1989) and the factors which influence one's ability to forgive (Rozedak and Harnden, 1992).

Doyle (1999) offers an intrapsychic conceptualisation of forgiveness with the use of a single case study. He studied the dynamics of forgiveness in a 36 year married female in the context of marital transgression. He demonstrated that forgiveness entails the gradual process of self and object representations and accompanying defences undergoing a remodification process to achieve optimal resolution. He found that gradual, congruent, parallel revision of major psychic systems is necessary for forgiveness to occur. He states that the intrapsychic definition of forgiveness is "the process of mobilizing the ego's developed capacity to re-adjust internal representations of the object and self from predominantly bad images to more realistic, balanced combinations of good and bad aspects of each person" (Doyle, 1999, p.193). He explains further that trauma can result at least temporarily in the polarizing of persons, affects, thoughts, and behaviour into good and bad. The punitive superego produces harsh treatment of the self and others. Doyle, (1999) suggests that a closer study of the process of forgiveness using an Object Relations paradigm could help clarify the role that reconfigured internal representations play in unravelling the repetitive compulsion can have on optimal human development.

While Object Relations theorists provide a rich, detailed conceptualisation of forgiveness, they lack the rigorous research of their arguments. Therefore, although ORT provides interesting and insightful contributions to the understanding of forgiveness, further empirical investigation is required. It would be beneficial to investigate empirically the different forms of forgiveness including pseudo-forgiveness, barriers to forgiveness, the role of perceptions of the self, others and perpetrator in forgiveness as well as the defence of hatred and splitting, and the intrapsychic mechanisms involved in forgiveness.

2.3 Conclusion

It is clear that research on forgiveness remains in its infant stages and additional investigation is required. Most of the published work focused on factors involved in forgiveness with the majority of research focussing on close interpersonal relationships and employing quantitative research techniques. Two aspects are missing from previous studies namely, forgiveness within non-intimate relationships and the processes of change involved in forgiveness. Therefore the most notable absence in the body of literature seems to be studies of how forgiveness is actually experienced in the context of stranger to stranger relationships.

An investigation into the phenomenon of forgiveness within a non-intimate context may reveal different nuances and aspects to forgiveness, never before uncovered. The nature of this difference lies mainly in the divergent properties of intimate compared to non-intimate relationships. Firstly, vastly disparate dynamics exist within intimate relationships in contrast to stranger to stranger relationships. Within the intimate context

are the variables of history between the individuals, incorporating both good and bad memories. Within the non-intimate context, one would anticipate that the victim is only able to form one memory of the perpetrator, which is largely unpleasant in nature. Furthermore, within the intimate context there is space for further communication between the victim and perpetrator whether it is verbal, non-verbal, direct or indirect. However, within the stranger to stranger context the perpetrator may become a nameless, faceless, abstract entity, with no space for communication between the victim and offender. Consequently, forgiveness may present itself in a novel form to that in which it has previously revealed itself. In order to achieve a comprehensive understanding of forgiveness it is essential to strip the phenomenon of the meaning, which initially appears and to locate the meaning as a way to identify the event as it appears in lived experience (Keen, 1975). Therefore it becomes possible to comprehend the event on various levels. It is important to look beyond the many obvious meanings of an event and to strip these away in order to unearth the other nuances and meanings that come into focus. Forgiveness needs to be investigated from the perspective of what it means to an individual and why, in terms of one's structures, experience and style in order to obtain a greater understanding of the phenomenon (Keen, 1975).

In addition, there seems to be contradicting perspectives on the basic nature of forgiveness, some suggesting that it involves a shift in perception of cognition while others assume that the capacity for forgiveness is part of one's personality makeup and is therefore a relatively stable characteristic. Consequently, novel areas of forgiveness lie open to be explored. The aim of the present study is to address some of these gaps in

research as well as to investigate and clarify some of the seemingly contradicting perspectives. Furthermore, the majority of studies seem to be atheoretical, calling attention to the need for an adequate psychological theory to describe and explain the phenomenon of forgiveness/unforgiveness. The review of literature suggests that Object Relations Theory provides a comprehensive understanding of this phenomenon. This theoretical framework will be used for the current study.

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1 Rationale and Aims

3.1.1 Rationale

Violent crime in South Africa is a startling reality, leaving countless individuals emotionally and psychologically crippled long after the physical scars have healed. Research has revealed that forgiveness holds great potential in restoring the life of individuals who have experienced extreme trauma, through infliction of an offence by another (Freedman and Enright, 1996). According to Hebl and Enright (1993) "If sanity is to be secured, the hate that binds in slavery must be loosened by forgiving those who have in truth or illusion, hurt or wronged us" (p.180). Past research in the area of forgiveness has been largely quantitative in nature and has focused primarily on forgiveness interventions and psychological variables as they are related to forgiveness, leaving the actual process or dynamics of forgiveness relatively unexplored. Few phenomenological studies have been conducted in order to elicit a greater understanding of the meaning of forgiveness. According to Pingleton (1997) "in order to adequately comprehend the tremendous scope and complexity of the forgiveness experience, it is essential to ground its definition solidly into the phenomenological context in which it is rooted" (p.404). This dissertation provides a novel investigation into the meaning of forgiveness and unforgiveness by exploring the experience of forgiveness and unforgiveness in victims with unknown perpetrators (criminals) and examining the meaning from an Object Relation's perspective.

According to Pingleton (1997) “one particular personality theory seems especially well-suited to the ambitious task of offering a potential explanation of why we don’t forgive” (p.406). This theory is psychodynamic orientated Object Relations Theory, which offers a multidimensional perspective for understanding the meaning of forgiveness in that it combines developmentally orientated strengths of the most valuable contributions of classical analytic theory with an explicit interpersonal orientated emphasis upon the determinants and uncertainties of the developmental process. According to Pingleton (1997) particular dynamics in the process of forgiveness may be seen to be causally linked to or emanating from specific arrests in one’s intrapsychic and interpersonal development. In addition, Object Relations Theory is also able to account for the empathy/forgiveness link, in that emerging empathy for the offender is seen as possibly a result of improved self-object differentiation. Gartner (1988 as cited in Doyle, 1999) stated that mature forgiveness is the direct result of reintegrating good and bad aspects of the self and object, not chronically splitting the offender into a wholly malicious object.

Pargament (1997) considers how often people actually do forgive others following serious mistreatment without clinical intervention. Is forgiveness a realistic problem or an unattainable ideal? Naturalistic studies of people grappling with personal violations are needed to answer this. It is important for research to distinguish forgiveness in a profound transformational sense from other acts such as denying, minimizing or simply forgetting.

According to Sells and Hargrave (1998) researchers in the area of forgiveness should delineate the meanings of forgiveness more clearly. Therefore, it is necessary to gain greater insight into the meaning, process and dynamics of the phenomenon of forgiveness as it is related to victims of violent crime in order to assist clinicians, counsellors and pastors in effective intervention and to uncover possible risk factors for unforgiveness or pseudo-forgiveness. In addition, the investigation of forgiveness has wider implications in terms of individual health, for example HIV/AIDS, social functioning through interpersonal restoration, and wider national political and international implications such as conflict resolution in warring countries. Therefore this study hopes to explore and deepen the understanding of the meaning and intra-psychic factors involved in forgiveness in order to contribute toward effective intervention and recovery of trauma.

3.1.2 Aims

Main Aim:

To investigate the lived experience or meaning of forgiveness and unforgiveness in victims of violent crime.

Sub aims/questions:

1. What is the psychological process by which forgiveness takes place?
2. What are the psychological factors, which contribute to or inhibit the forgiveness process?
3. How might forgiveness/unforgiveness be understood from an Object Relations perspective?

3.2 Research Design

Keen (1975) asserts that the goal of every research method is to help the phenomenon under investigation to reveal itself more completely than it does in ordinary experience. This implies that the phenomenon has several layers of meaning that one can access, however they are implicit and unclear. Therefore the appropriate method is required to access and reveal these meanings. To achieve this aim, the methodology chosen was the empirical phenomenological method as described by Giorgi (1985). This method is considered suitable to investigate the complex and diverse phenomenon of forgiveness as it is clear, systematic and empirical.

The research objective of this study was to investigate the psychological meaning of forgiveness and unforgiveness in the context of violent crime, thereby requiring a form of qualitative methodology and design. According to Fow (1996) “experimental methods which depend upon operational definitions, quantification and measurement may not be suited to the study of certain phenomena...forgiveness may be one such phenomenon” (p.219). This is due to the fact that traditional psychological research removes forgiveness from its everyday and psychotherapeutic contexts by providing narrow definitions of forgiveness rather than its intricate and complex meaning. Although some studies employ well-designed methodology and reveal the relationship between forgiveness and other psychological variables, a fundamental understanding of the meaning and process of forgiveness is not provided (Fow, 1996). In contrast, a phenomenological research methodology (Giorgi, 1979, Giorgi, 1985) has been shown to

complement quantitative approaches by providing detailed, in-depth descriptions of psychological phenomena (Fow, 1996). Qualitative research involves the investigation, expansion and systemization of the significance of identified phenomena and the illumination of the meaning of a delimited issue or problem (Banister, Burman, Parker, Taylor and Tindall, 1994). The issue of forgiveness and violent crime may be a problematic notion, as it would seem that one is referring to the forgiving of the unforgivable. Within the context of human rights, justice and retribution, hatred toward one's offender may be unproblematically assimilated into the everyday collective experience. Therefore, suggestions of forgiveness in the midst of violent crime disrupt the tissue of pre-reflective or practical understanding because its meaning is not immediately discernible. This disruption in understanding prompts one to ask what forgiveness is about and why people should forgive because the meaning of forgiveness is problematic within the context of a harsh, vengeful and bitter society. Consequently, the method of phenomenological investigation will be employed to investigate this problematic notion and enhance the understanding of forgiveness and unforgiveness within the context of criminal victimisation.

3.3 Collection of Data

3.3.1 Research Questions

Forgiveness has been defined differently according to differing theoretical perspectives and an air of confusion and misunderstanding tends to cloud its meaning. Consequently, individuals hold a wide range of personal definitions regarding the meaning of forgiveness. Therefore, a thorough investigation of the literature concerning forgiveness

allowed the researcher to identify the major issues and related phenomena and sub phenomena associated with forgiveness in order to arrive at the most comprehensive definition. It was found that North (1987) offers a relatively complete definition of forgiveness and this will be used as a reference point in determining the extent to which participants have forgiven their perpetrators. North (1987) states “If we are to forgive, our resentment is to be overcome not by denying ourselves the right to that resentment but by endeavoring to view the wrongdoer with compassion, benevolence and love while recognizing that he has willfully abandoned his right to them” (p. 502). The research question was formulated to elicit the victim’s descriptions of their experience and how they coped with their ordeal. “Would you like to tell me about the incident in which you were criminally victimized?” The question was general and open ended in order to elicit spontaneous material concerning the coping process and their attitude toward the perpetrator/s. Subsequent questions (see Appendix C) were formulated to ensure that the participant had comprehensively covered the areas under investigation according to the aims of the research. All questions were aimed toward eliciting the participant’s actual experience of forgiveness or unforgiveness. It is important to note that the researcher did not explicitly ask the participant about an incident in which he/she forgave. This was to diminish the occurrence of leading and biased responses.

3.3.2 Subjects

The majority of the literature on forgiveness has been investigated within the context of close interpersonal relationships. The primary objective of this research was to describe how victims of crime experienced forgiveness or unforgiveness subsequent to their

victimisation. A purposeful sample of 6 subjects from the Kwa-Zulu Natal region, who had been victims of violent/traumatic crime, were selected through the technique of snowballing. The snowballing technique, in which participants were asked to provide information about individuals who have undergone a similar experience was useful, in that it guided the researcher to the specific type of participants required. However, the researcher runs the risk of obtaining a biased sample. The initial two participants were located through a church organisation and a local magazine. The snowballing technique was then employed to locate the remainder of the subjects. The participants were defined as individuals who had experienced trauma as a result of criminal attack by means of a weapon or physical force. The experience of trauma was a prerequisite, as individuals will experience fear and anger, creating a situation in which forgiveness may be considered. A wide variation of variables amongst the sample such as age, gender, race, spirituality and presence or absence of forgiveness was obtained.

3.3.3 Ethical Considerations

The researcher contacted each participant by telephone. If a potential participant agreed to consider participation, written consent (Appendix B) was obtained from him/her, which was voluntary and informed (Terre Blanche and Durrheim, 1999). This was done in order to protect the rights of autonomy of the subjects. The participants received a letter in order to inform them of the title, purpose and the procedure of the research study (Appendix A). In addition, the researcher mentioned benefits and risks of participation and the freedom to withdraw from the study at any time. In addition, participants were free to ask the researcher questions at any time.

The letter of consent also notified the participants of the parameters and limits of confidentiality. Participants were informed of how the data was to be recorded, stored and processed. The personal identity of participants remained anonymous. In addition, the researcher asked participants information pertaining strictly to the subject of study in order to preserve privacy.

Due to the nature of the research topic, participants may have been particularly sensitive to some of the issues. Traumatic memories and feelings may have been elicited during the research interview. The possibility of this sensitivity was made clear to participants prior to the commencement of the interview. The researcher also offered to facilitate referral to appropriate support structures should the need arise.

3.3.4 Interviews

Interviews were conducted at a location where the participant felt most comfortable. A qualitative interview method (Silverman, 2000) aimed at gathering descriptions of the life world of the subjects with respect to their experience of forgiveness and crime was used. At the start of the interview the researcher asked a general opening question about the incident in which the participant was criminally victimized, designed to allow the participant to speak uninterruptedly about their experience. Subsequent questions were more specific in order to reveal the underlying experience of forgiveness for the participant (Appendix C). The pre-designed follow up questions were used as a flexible guideline and were informed by the literature. These questions were asked only after the participant had completed a full account of his or her story. Information from these

questions was found to complement and enrich the information from the participant's story rather than contradict it. Consequently, the information was included in the analysis. Interviews were recorded and transcribed for analysis with consent from the participants.

3.4 Data Analysis

The method used to analyse the transcriptions was Giorgi's (1985) phenomenological method adapted slightly by Wertz (1985 as cited in Giorgi, 1985). This method involves the following essential steps:

1. Initial Reading of the Transcription

The entire description was read as many times as necessary in order to obtain a sense of the statement and experience as a whole. The description was also read while simultaneously listening to the recording in order to recapture the emotional tone and verbal expression.

2. Extraction of Meaning Units

The researcher then read through the text with the specific aim of identifying discrete meaning units and breaking up the transcription into these natural meaning units. These meaning units were discriminated according to changes in psychological meaning, which were perceived by the researcher and with a focus on the phenomena being studied. Each meaning unit was distinguished from the next according to certain criteria. The criteria

included whether the unit had meaning in isolation from the surrounding text and had unique relevance to the phenomena under investigation.

3. Re-articulation of Meaning Units from a Psychological Perspective

The researcher then re-articulated the meaning units into a psychological language through a process of reflection and imaginative variation. Each transformed meaning unit represented the essential psychological meaning of the unit with a focus on understanding the process of forgiveness and the aims of the investigation.

4. Stating of Transformed Meaning Units into a Coherent Description

The researcher then restated the transformed meaning units according to common themes and located them so that they reflected the pattern of the participant's experience over time, similar to a case study. Data irrelevant to the topic of investigation and repetitive data were excluded. The researcher then synthesized the regrouped transformed meaning units into a consistent description of the experience of violent crime and the process of forgiveness or unforgiveness. The narrative was divided into time segments in order to distinguish the psychological meaning for the participant as it occurred over time. The psychological experience was divided temporally into 4 segments including (1) 'the world before victimisation,' (2) 'the world during victimisation,' (3) 'the struggle against victimisation' and (4) 'the new world after victimisation with/without forgiveness.' (Giorgi, 1985).

5. Central Themes

The transformed meaning units were grouped according to similarities, central themes and issues related to forgiveness and coping with violent crime. Each central theme formed a general description of a number of transformed meaning units and was arrived at with a view to formulating the general structure.

6. Summary of Experience of Forgiveness or Unforgiveness for Each Participant

The central themes and transformed meaning units were used to provide a summarized description of the experience of forgiveness by each participant, focussing specifically on what it meant to them.

7. Comparison Table

The central themes of each participant as well as the summarized experience of forgiveness was tabulated, enabling the researcher to compare the experience of individuals who had forgiven with those who had not forgiven. Criteria for deciding which participant forgave and who did not, was based on the definition by North (1987) discussed in the introduction, which outlines five elements of forgiveness. This table was then followed by an explanation and summary of the table by forming a general structure of those who forgave with those who did not.

The construction of the comparison table required an intensely reflective look into the dialogue between each protocol's narrative and central themes in order to isolate and identify common elements and structures. Imaginative variation (Giorgi, 1985) was employed to distance oneself from the concrete details and move beyond the generality

provided by the different protocols. Each of the general statements were then compared with each individual narrative and central theme in order to confirm their generalization.

8. Object Relations Perspective

Given the theoretical nature of this study, the comparison table and general structures of forgiveness and unforgiveness were explored from an Object Relations perspective.

| Table 2: Example of Data Analysis | |
|--|--|
| Steps of Data Analysis | Example from participant 4 |
| Step 1. Initial Reading of the transcription | <p>Um, well I was always managing at wimpy in the evening so and I had to work that night and that evening was quiet. Hey very nervous, very nervous 'cause, like it's impossible that those guys are gonna come to wimpy and rob me but I still remember 'cause I was quite young then. Its about five years ago, so about 21 or 22. About 22. Or about 23. Ja, around there that age. And that and I was quite nervous. It was a scary moment hey.</p> <p><i>(So you experienced quite a lot of fear then?)</i></p> <p>Ja, quite a lot of fear. Um, I don't think, I was I thought, not about the moment of that moment, and that I thought about the consequences if I didn't keep sharp it wouldn't happen again. And then the fear of what was happening then what's it I never. That's what drove me to be a lot more secure and that on trying to be safe. Up to date now, that fear I suppose drives me to be safe. To be cautious and that and to watch EVERYONE. I watch everyone and that, not necessarily black people or white people. It doesn't matter. Especially now that I am still working in the restaurant trade in the evenings and that. Even when I started my own business, and that I was carrying, walking around with seven or ten or whatever and that and you watch everyone.</p> |
| Step 2. Extraction of meaning units | <p>Um, well I was always managing at wimpy in the evening so and I had to work that night and that evening was quiet. Hey very nervous, very nervous 'cause, like its impossible that those guys and gonna come to wimpy and rob me but I still remember 'cause I was quite young then. Its about five years ago, so about 21 or 22. About 22. Or about 23. Ja, around there that age. And that and I was quite nervous. It was a scary moment hey.</p> <p><i>(So you experienced quite a lot of fear then?)</i></p> <p>Ja, quite a lot of fear.</p> |

| | |
|---|---|
| | <p>Um, I don't think, I was I thought, not about the moment of that moment, and that I thought about the consequences if I didn't keep sharp it wouldn't happen again. And then the fear of what was happening then what's it I never. That's what drove me to be a lot more secure and that on trying to be safe. Up to date now, that fear I suppose drives me to be safe. To be cautious and that and to watch EVERYONE. I watch everyone and that, not necessarily black people or white people. It doesn't matter. Especially now that I am still working in the restaurant trade in the evenings and that. Even when I started my own business, and that I was carrying, walking around with seven or ten or whatever and that and you watch everyone.</p> |
| Step 3. Re-articulation of meaning units from a psychological perspective | <p>S experienced intense fear of being retraumatised. He sees himself as fearful, paranoid and unreasonable. He seems to personalise the attack in the absence of the perpetrators when he can no longer see them but exists as unknown abstract entities. He sees them as coming after him.</p> |
| | <p>S sees others as untrustworthy and as potential attackers and experiences extreme anxiety. S has adopted ways of ensuring his safety to prevent further trauma and to make his world more predictable and controllable. S feels that if he is highly alert he can control his life and prevent further chaos.</p> |
| Step 4. Stating of transformed meaning units into a coherent description | Example Appendix E |
| Step 5. Central themes | Example Appendix E |

Steps 6, 7 and 8 are shown in detail in the results section.

4. RESULTS

This section presents the findings of the present study. Firstly, a summary of each participant experience is presented, followed by an explanation of the summary table, which is in appendix D.

(See Appendix E for an example of a comprehensive analysis)

4.1 A Summary of the Experience of Forgiveness/Unforgiveness

Subject 1 (Unforgiveness)

P seems to experience unforgiveness towards the attackers but also towards himself. P's experience of unforgiveness is one in which he holds onto deep hostility and anger and finds meaning or purpose in his desire for revenge. His perception of the perpetrators makes him incapable of relating to them as he sees them as all bad and intentionally malicious. P's unforgiveness for himself stems from a failure to live up to his heroic self-representation, which he felt was in control, strong and responsible. The event brought him into contact with a weak, fragile and helpless self-representation, which he could not tolerate. Therefore, he lives his life fragmented, unable to integrate and accept his weaknesses or fragility. Consequently, his experience of his world in unforgiveness consists of ways to avoid the failed self-representation and to attempt to rebuild his dominant, heroic self-representation. His behaviour is aimed at eliminating any further threat to his self-representation, thereby being overly cautious, suspicious and attempting to be in complete control. However, he experiences guilt for failing to live up to his unrealistic expectations of being in complete control and being completely responsible in every situation. He also avoids those people and situations which may confront or

challenge his dominant self-representation, which includes being heroic, strong and in control, thereby causing disconnections from others and broken relationships. Therefore his world or experience of unforgiveness consists of being isolated and avoidant. He is only conscious of himself as good and sees the majority of others as bad and threatening. Consequently, his world is experienced as evil, bad and persecutory, where he can trust no one. His world is therefore experienced as harsh and dangerous and his life as meaningless. The only meaning he obtains from life seems to come from his drive to reassert his dominant self-representation or to rebuild that, which was shattered.

Subject 2 (Pseudo-forgiveness)

Although R expresses and possibly believes that she has forgiven her perpetrator, she essentially experiences a form of pseudo-forgiveness. R essentially experiences forgiveness as a forgetting, avoiding and a banishing of the perpetrator from her conscious mind. The offence in this case occurred on two levels. Firstly, the physical assault of the perpetrator as well as the failure of herself to live up to and maintain her strong, self-sufficient and competent self representation. Consequently, forgetting involves both banishing the perpetrator from her conscious mind as well as anything that may confront her with her weak or dependent self-representation. Secondly, in order to ward off the existence of her weak self-representation, R attempts to keep busy and competent and to contain and control her emotions in all circumstances. R, in this way experiences herself as emotionally strong and competent, while denying or avoiding any emotion that may be an indication of weakness for her. Therefore, although she denies the existence of fear and anger in connection with the perpetrators, her reported

behaviour tells another story. She experiences intense fear of black men as she has generalised her perpetrator into this category. She sees all black men as bad and dangerous and therefore fears them. Consequently, she lives in a persecutory world consisting of 'monsters', which threaten to attack her causing her to be cautious and suspicious of those around her. In this way she is unable to relate to her perpetrator or to people who represent his race. Furthermore, she also experiences a deep resentment and hostility toward all black men, which is evident in her behaviour towards them. Her world consists of good and bad people, which seems to have split off from each other. In addition, she is unable to find meaning in the event, as this would bring her into contact with intolerable emotions and her fragile self-representation. Consequently, she experiences a confusing world devoid of meaning. R seems to live a constrained, restricted existence in a world of danger and "persecutory devils"

Subject 3 (Forgiveness)

G experiences forgiveness as an acceptance and integration of his vulnerable/fragile self-representation into his whole self. He is able to recognise both his strengths and his weaknesses, which contributes to his characteristic of humility. In the same way he is able to experience a realistic perception of the perpetrators as having both weaknesses and strengths and their need for forgiveness, therefore being able to empathise with and relate to them. He also experienced a 'letting go' of anger and hostility by reporting a lowering of hostility towards his offenders as well as being able to report positive conceptions of them. G experienced forgiveness as a heightened consciousness of his own need for forgiveness. In addition, G experienced a drawing nearer to significant

others and an ability to relate to others more easily as well as a heightened sense of the value and importance of relationships. G experiences forgiveness as an acceptance of the situation and of his whole self and does not allow it to negatively influence the rest of his life.

He does not experience forgiveness as a condonation of the crime but maintains the need for justice. G is also able to find meaning or significance in the experience as well as life in general. He experiences life as meaningful and the world as largely good without denying the negative elements. Although he became more conscious of threat this did not significantly constrain his world in terms of time and space.

Subject 4 (Unforgiveness)

E's core experience of unforgiveness is one of feeling trapped and of being locked in the past and in his world. His experience of unforgiveness occurs on 2 levels. Firstly, E's experience of unforgiveness consists of an inability to relate to the perpetrators and a holding onto deep aggression and anger. His inability to relate to them stems from the way in which he sees them, as inherently evil and "all bad." He has represented them as persecutory, inhuman attackers.

Secondly, E struggles to integrate a vulnerable, helpless, powerless and fragile self-representation, which is in opposition to his protective, helpful and strong dominant self-representation. He experiences guilt over his failed self-representation and an inability to protect his family. He also attempts to rebuild his broken self-image and avoid all consciousness of his weak self-representation by reverting to helpful behaviour and

competency in busyness. He also attempts to gain greater control over his life and enhance his sense of perceived responsibility. In addition, he experiences an inability to express or accept emotion within himself as this is perceived as an indication of weakness and a reminder of a more fragile sense of self. This is accompanied by an inability to relate to those who are in touch with their emotions and who are able to express their needs. He attempts to forget and bury the 'assault' and the reality of the trauma to his self-representation but he has created a heroic story in his mind and is able to tell others about it. Consequently, he seems to live in denial of the trauma and of its effect on his life.

He experiences isolation from those who may have threatened his strong self-representation and only maintained relationships with those who were supportive of his strong self-representation. Thereby, he experiences himself as disconnected and misunderstood by others. He also seems to split people into two categories of good and bad. In this way he lives in a world of 'angels' and 'demons' rather than of humans with both strengths and weaknesses. Consequently, he experiences paranoid anxiety and fear as he lives in a world of persecutory 'monsters.' In addition, he experiences the world as harsh, unrelenting, persecutory, threatening and unpredictable. Consequently, life is experienced as a battle that he has to continue with no rest or relief.

Subject 5 (Pseudo-forgiveness)

The subject's core experience of unforgiveness is one of 'holding onto' anger and fear and living in a world that is constrained in terms of space and time. His experience of

unforgiveness involves an inability to see 'goodness' within the perpetrators or his co-worker and an inability to empathise with them, thereby eliminating the possibility of relating to them. He also experiences an emotional and mental distancing and avoidance from the perpetrators. He represents the attackers as nameless, and faceless 'monsters,' consequently experiencing intense fear and paranoid anxiety in his unsafe world.

He continues to experience himself as neglected, violated, uncared for and unprotected by his co-worker and others in general. Thereby experiencing some form of underlying bitterness and contempt for the world and others. In this way he construes his whole world as potential attackers, contributing to his inability to trust and leading to an experience of his life and the world as difficult and harsh.

S experiences himself as insecure, cautious, constrained and unable to relax. He seems to experience unforgiveness as a heroic mission to rebuild his strong and protective self-representation. He sees himself as a victim and as different from anyone else. He also construes himself as unique and unable to relate to others (his persecutory world) as he attempts to be self-sufficient and completely independent.

S experiences an attempt to regain control and to prevent further trauma by living his life immersed in busyness and by being extremely cautious and suspicious of others.

Consequently, his experience of unforgiveness is a constriction of time and space as his lived world seems to have become smaller. He is unable to tolerate an uncertain and unpredictable world, thereby attempting to ensure control and predictability where ever

he can. In addition, his view of others is polarised as he sees others as all good or all bad. S attempts to live his life in denial of the need for others and strives to be self-sufficient as he construes others as unreliable, disappointing and untrustworthy. Consequently, his world is experienced as a cage in which he is trapped.

S's pattern seems to be to distance himself and not think about those who have hurt him, including his mother and the perpetrator, both of which he has a deep hate for.

Subject 6 (Unforgiveness)

The subject's core experience of unforgiveness is of a feeling of confusion and fragmentation through forgetting, blocking and distancing of emotionally traumatic material. She attempts to distance herself from the attackers both physically and psychologically. Therefore she experiences the attackers as a nameless, faceless entity, which continues to intimidate her. She construes the attackers as 'monsters' and 'omnipotent beings' and she becomes tormented by a stereotyped generalised representation.

The subject is also unable to accept the terror of her own sense of fragility and helplessness. She experiences herself as unsafe and threatened physically but attempts to be emotionally strong. In addition, she attempts to be overly cautious and hypervigilant and experiences herself as trapped and constrained in her world. She also feels responsible for her life and her victimisation in an attempt to regain control however, experiences consequent feelings of guilt.

She sees the majority of others as threatening and dishonest and only a handful as potentially good and helpful. She also sees most of the world as being untrustworthy and persecutory. Therefore her world is experienced as harsh, restricted and constricted and she lives in expectation of danger. Furthermore, her attempt to screen out her emotions and block out the world leaves her feeling confused and fragmented.

She sees the majority of others as threatening and dishonest and only a handful as potentially good and helpful. She also sees most of the world as being untrustworthy and persecutory. Therefore her world is experienced as harsh, restricted and constricted and she lives in expectation of danger. Furthermore, her attempt to screen out her emotions and block out the world leaves her feeling confused and fragmented.

4.2 Results Explanation

4.2.1 Table 1: Before Victimization (Appendix D)

Self-representations

When comparing and contrasting the participants' self-representations before the victimisation, certain elements seem to emerge. All subjects seem to be largely conscious of their strong, positive self-representations. However, subject 3, the only one who seemed to forgive, was also conscious of and expressed his weaknesses. In addition, it seems that the majority of subjects who experienced unforgiveness or pseudo-forgiveness defined themselves as self-sufficient and others in need of them, while the subject who forgave described himself as intimately connected to others and in need of them.

Representations of Others

Almost all the participants (1,2,4,6) seemed to see people as good and trustworthy. However, the subject who forgave seems to be the only one who describes others in their detail and intricacy and sees individuals as consisting of good and bad elements rather than seeing them as good or bad compared to the rest of the participants, who did not forgive. In addition, three participants who did not forgive also seemed to define others in

terms of others need for them, putting themselves in a superior and more powerful position.

Representation of the World

Most participants (1,2,3,4) represent the world as a safe place.

Representation of Personal Relationships

Certain patterns seem to emerge in the way some of the participants perceive and represent their personal relationships. Three participants (1,2,4), who did not forgive, seemed to define their personal relationships in terms of what they could offer or provide their significant others rather than describe them in terms of their own personal qualities. However participant 3, who forgave, seemed to be the only one who described his significant others for what they had to offer. In addition, there seemed to be a pattern of idealising one parent and devaluing the other in some of the participants who did not forgive (participants 4,5,6). The rest of the participants who did not forgive described their parental relationship as pleasant and the other did not offer information on his parental relationships. The participant who forgave describes his relationship with his parents as central in his life and sees himself as intimately connected to both of them.

4.3.2 Table 2: After Victimization With or Without Forgiveness (Appendix D)

Self-representations

A definite pattern seems to emerge in the representations of those who did not forgive. Firstly, all these participants experienced a failure of their dominant positive self-representation and were unable to integrate or accept this weak self-representation into

their whole self. This resulted in underlying uncomfortable feelings of guilt, which seemed to drive certain changes in behaviour. The behaviours adopted were aimed at buttressing and reinforcing their dominant self-representation, while avoiding anything associated with their negative self-representation. Consequently, the participants attempted to keep busy in order to see themselves as competent, in control and responsible. They also attempted to avoid emotional expression, which may be perceived as an indication of weakness or to remind them of their failed self-representation. In addition, most participants became hypervigilant and incorporated safety and precautionary behaviours into their everyday lives in order to make their world more controllable, predictable and safe.

In contrast the participant who did forgive seemed to be able to integrate and feel relatively comfortable with the consciousness of his weaker self-representation and was able to integrate it into his whole self-representation. In addition, this participant was also conscious of his own need for forgiveness.

Representations of Others

A pattern also seems to emerge in the representation of others in those participants who did not forgive. These participants seemed to experience a shift in their representations of others to see the majority of others as bad and to diminish their ability to trust others and enhance their suspiciousness. They all seem to see others as either good or bad and have formed generalised representations of what they construe as bad and have created a world inhabited by 'monsters' or individuals who are 'all bad'. Therefore they tend to see the majority of others as potential attackers and experienced heightened feelings of

criticism, bitterness and contempt for others. In contrast, the participant who did forgive seemed to accept that all humans have an element of fragility and weakness and was able to relate this to his own sense of fragility. Therefore he experiences a deeper sense of commonality with others and an enhanced capacity to relate to them.

Representations of the Perpetrators

Common themes seem to emerge in the way the participants who did not forgive construe their perpetrator/s. They seem to represent the perpetrator as all bad or inherently evil, thereby creating a 'monster' or 'demon' out of a human being. Consequently, most of these participants experience fear toward their perpetrators and are unable to take into account the perpetrators circumstances or context when committing the crime. This seems to suggest that the individuals become victimised by their own representation of the perpetrator. The subjects seem unable to relate to or empathise with their perpetrator except participant 6. These participants also experience a continuing feeling of anger, resentment and hostility toward their perpetrator as well as in some cases those similar to their perpetrators (participants, 2, 6). In addition, some subjects also seemed to attempt to distance themselves from the perpetrator by attempting not to think about or acknowledge emotion toward them (participants 1, 2, 4, 5, 6). In contrast, the participant who seemed able to forgive had a more holistic representation of the attackers recognising both their good and bad qualities. In this way he was able to see their 'humanness.' He was therefore able to relate to them and empathise with them as well as take their circumstances into account when evaluating their behaviour. He also did not attempt to avoid or deny his emotions or distance himself from the perpetrators

emotionally or physically. He was able to admit his anger and fear initially. He also seemed free from anger and resentment following forgiveness as well as crippling fear or prejudice.

Representation of the World and Life

There also seems to be striking similarities in the way those participants who did not forgive view the world and their lives. All these participants experience a heightened consciousness of threat in their world and their resultant incorporation of precautionary measures seems to restrict and constrict their world in terms of space and time. Their lives and the world are also experienced as harsh, difficult and unrelenting. In addition, their lives seem to be devoid of meaning apart from their effort to rebuild their dominant self-representations. When looking at the participant who did forgive one can see a different conceptualisation of his life and world. This participant is able to integrate and assimilate the threatening aspect of his world into his whole representation of it. In this way he is able to recognise both the negative and positive aspects of the world with the positive aspect being more central in his mind. He also describes his life as having meaning, purpose and pleasure.

Personal Relationships

Those participants who did not forgive seemed to experience a breakdown in some of their relationships partly due to an inability to trust. The participants with pseudo-forgiveness seemed to experience no change in their relationships while the participant who did forgive experienced a deeper connection and meaningfulness in relationships.

Experience of Forgiveness.

It seems that both those participants with unforgiveness and pseudo-forgiveness experience an inability to relate to their perpetrators. However, there are certain differences between unforgiveness and pseudo-forgiveness. Firstly, a common pattern emerged in those who did not forgive. They seemed to want to distance themselves from the perpetrators. They were able to admit their anger and feelings of guilt and responsibility where applicable. In addition, they seemed to ruminate about the event and think about the perpetrators. They tended to see the offenders as opposite to themselves, i.e. the perpetrators as bad and themselves as good. They then experienced either a confirmation that the world was harsh and difficult or a new revelation of this.

In the case of pseudo-forgiveness it seems that these participants are locked in an earlier stage of the process of forgiveness, in that they continue to distance themselves from the perpetrator and the event, and therefore struggled to admit anger or contemplate their emotions and perceptions of their perpetrator.

In the case of forgiveness, the initial process seemed to be similar to those who did not forgive, however without an emotional distancing from the perpetrator. The participant admitted feelings of anger toward the attackers followed by thoughts concerning the perpetrators and the event. He also compared himself to the perpetrators but instead of seeing himself as opposite to the offender, he saw himself as similar. As a result his new theory of life was positive, enhancing his perception of the value of people and relationships. He was able to experience empathy, compassion and humanise the perpetrator as well as experience positive affect toward the perpetrator and an emotional

release. However, what remains unclear is where in this process the participant chose to forgive.

5. DISCUSSION

The aim of this research was to describe the lived experience of forgiveness/unforgiveness in individuals who had been victims of violent crime. This chapter discusses the results with reference to information in the literature review, focusing primarily on an Object Relations perspective.

5.1 Commonality of the Participants' Experience

Forgiveness is necessitated when one sustains a violation to one's sense of justice and experiences a sense of deprivation of love (Pingleton, 1997). All participants in this study suffered some form of loss and experienced a painful diminishment of their pride, self-esteem and power, which might be described as an injury to their narcissistic selves. They were confronted with their weak and fragile self-representations as a result of their experience of being victimized. In conjunction with this, was a deeper realisation of their human frailty, limitations and underlying vulnerability, helplessness, dependency and inadequacy (Pingleton, 1997).

Consequently, all participants suffered some form of psychological injury by another, which initiated the process of forgiveness or unforgiveness. According to ORT, the injured party's ability (or lack thereof) to integrate these weak and fragile self-representations seems to be a core, contributing factor in the capacity to forgive. In the majority of participants, the trauma resulted in a splitting defence by the ego. One

participant however, appeared to integrate rather than split off his weak and fragile self-representation. The way in which splitting versus integration occurred will be described in more detail in the following sections.

5.2 The Experience of Forgiveness Compared to Unforgiveness

In order to arrive at a deeper understanding of forgiveness, it is interesting to compare those participants who did not forgive with those who did along several dimensions, including their representations of the self, the other, the perpetrators, the world and their life as well as their significant personal relationships.

5.2.1 Self-representation

The findings revealed that individuals who did not forgive were unable to integrate or accept their weak, fragile, helpless and vulnerable self-representations into their whole self but rather projected these off onto the perpetrator or others. This inability to integrate their weakness seemed to be fuelled by underlying, uncomfortable feelings of guilt and anxiety connected to their failed self-representations. This anxiety seemed to drive certain changes in behaviour in order to alleviate these uncomfortable feelings. The behaviours adopted were aimed at buttressing and reinforcing their dominant self-representation, while avoiding anything associated with their negative, weak and fragile self-representation. Consequently, these participants attempted to keep busy, to see themselves as competent, in control and responsible as well as to avoid emotional expression, which may be perceived as an indication of weakness. One participant who

did not forgive states: “*And, um, it was tough, it was really, really a tough period and there was too much work to be, needed to be done to bother about trying to work out whether I am coping or not going to cope. ‘I’M FINE, I’M TOPS. ’ Because what else can you say? Oh, I’m moping or I’m down or...it’s irrelevant, it’s happened, it’s in the past. Put it behind you, get on and, um, that’s how I coped”* (Participant 4).

In contrast, the results of this study revealed that the participant who was able to forgive seem to integrate and feel relatively comfortable with the consciousness of his weaker self-representation and was able to integrate it into his whole self-representation. The participant who forgave states: “*I’m seeing the weakness in my life and I’m working on that and it’s really changing things”* (Participant 3).

Object Relations Theory gives a convincing account of these two contrasting processes with the notion of splitting (Klein, 1964, Kernberg, 1992). It would appear that those participants who did not forgive had extreme, idealised, internal representations of the self and had split off those aspects of the self they considered bad, weak and vulnerable. On the other hand the ability to forgive seems to be associated with the capacity to perceive and experience oneself and others as integrated, complex persons with needs and rights including both negative and positive attributes. According to Object Relations Theory, a realistic self-representation as opposed to an egocentric and narcissistic view of oneself is the mark of psychological health (Sells and Hargrave, 1998).

Worthington's (1998) suggestion that humility is also necessary in the process of forgiveness also obtains some support from the findings of this study. Humility involves an awareness of one's own weaknesses and need for forgiveness. Findings indicated that those participants who were unable to forgive, or who chose not to forgive, seemed to see themselves as somehow superior to their perpetrators and in some cases to others in general, without recognising their own fallibility or potential for 'badness.' However, the participant who was able to forgive saw himself as similar to others as well as in need of forgiveness, recognising his own fallibility.

The findings also suggested that individuals who did not forgive seemed to see themselves as uncared for or neglected by others, while this was not the case with the individual who did forgive. This seems to fit the good self /bad object split by reinforcing the representation of the self as innocent and therefore good, while representing the other as abusive and therefore bad "*Just you see people are shallow you don't trust them. You don't express yourself, they are not worth it. Why tell them something when they couldn't care? No, they don't care for anyone else's lives except their own*" (Participant 1). In contrast, the participant who did forgive represented the majority of others as good and concerned for him. "*Uh I ended up telling a lot of people, a lot of people asked me and it made me realise that people really care, cause they showed such interest*" (Participant 3). It is clear that the participant who did forgive did not seem to suffer the same feelings of neglect and persecution from others as those who did not forgive. Consequently, it appears that while the split might be triggered by traumatic events, it leaves the person the victim of these splits.

It was evident from the results that a number of participants who did not forgive seemed to hold themselves responsible for the trauma. This can be explained in terms of ORT. According to Pingleton (1997) “Dynamically counterposed to the sadistic way of relating angrily to others, is the masochistic way of relating to one’s narcissistic self with punitive guilt” (p.410). Instead of only blaming others projectively as a result of trauma, the individual internalises the blame and attempts to punish him/herself for the self-related limitations, which allowed the injury originally. These individuals may be unwilling to surrender their perfectionist strivings and accept their weaker self or they may use self-punitive guilt to manipulate others to feel sorry for them. This seemed to be the case in some individuals who did not forgive. *“I don’t know I felt too bad. ‘Cause it was my fault so...It was my decision...it was my responsibility”* (Participant 1). This is consistent with the earlier finding of self-idealisation, as these participants are unable to accept their self-limitations.

5.2.2 Representation of Others

Findings revealed that the capacity to forgive was associated with the ability to see others as human beings, with both good and bad attributes, while an inability to forgive was associated with the tendency to either extremely devalue or idealise others. A particular participant who did not forgive states: *“I think the majority of people are bad not good... People don’t care for other people, that is the way it goes...The majority of people are shallow”* (Participant 1). On the other hand the participant who chose to forgive saw others in a realistic way, consisting of both good and bad characteristics and was able to

tolerate weakness in others. *“I know that with every single person, without a doubt has fallen short of that so we all need forgiveness”* (Participant 3).

According to Wapnick (1985) forgiveness enables an individual to challenge his or her distorted ways of thinking about and perceiving others. This implies that forgiveness precedes the ability to perceive others as whole individuals. However, one could argue that an individual who is more likely to forgive already has the capacity to view others realistically and holistically and therefore it is easier for that individual to forgive initially. The latter perspective seems more likely in the explanation of this study’s findings. It was found that an individual who is more likely to forgive seemed to construe others as having both good and bad qualities, while those that are less likely to forgive seemed to categorise individuals as either all good or all bad, without recognising their intricacy or humanness. This difference in the way the participants construed others was evident both before and after the assault.

5.2.3 Representation of the Perpetrators

Empathy

This study also seems to support McCullough, Worthington and Rachal’s (1997) findings, which suggest that people forgive others to the extent that they experience empathy for them. The findings of the present study suggest that an individual who is able to relate to and empathise with his/her perpetrator, as well as take their perpetrator’s circumstances into account when evaluating their behaviour, is more likely to forgive than an individual who is unable to empathise.

With reference to the review of literature, there are several theorists who attempt to explain the link between empathy and forgiveness. The majority of studies suggest that empathy is a prerequisite for forgiveness.

Firstly, the assertion by Weiner, Graham, Peter and Zmuidinas (1991) that individuals who are more empathetic to their offenders are more likely to make external and uncontrollable attributions also gained support from this study. One of the participants who did not forgive states: *“it’s still inside you hey... morals...still the final decision is you they must have made that decision...So you can’t blame their parents for this or that or...they must have made the decision”* (Participant 1). Another participant states: *“I mean, he’s as much to blame for the situation that he finds himself in...as the system that put him there...because he still had choices”* (Participant 6). It appears that those individuals who did not forgive seemed to view “badness” as emanating completely from within the perpetrator, without taking the perpetrators external circumstances into account. On the other hand the participant who did forgive seemed to attribute the crime to external and uncontrollable sources. He states: *“I understand that people need money you know. And i’ve often put myself in the predicament, the position of, what if my predicament was no money, would I would I rob you know?”* (Participant 3).

Similarly, Weiner (1993) suggests that both empathy and forgiveness are associated with an attributional change or a shift in thinking about the perpetrator and the situation, which seems logical, as this constituted the definition of empathy. However, the question to

consider is whether a shift in thinking is always necessary. Consider the evidence in this study, which suggests that the way in which the victim perceived the offender may have been a function of his personality style (trait) or his characteristic mode of making attributions. However, it is possible that a shift is required in order to move an individual from unforgiveness toward forgiveness.

Secondly, Lauffer's (1971 as cited in Keen, 1975) study may provide some clarity on this issue. Lauffer's (1971 as cited in Keen, 1975) assertion that one is relatively able or unable to experience empathy depending on the structure of one's lived world, seems to provide some insight into the findings in this study. Keen (1975) states that one's world "is where we are most fundamentally. My orientation to the world is the most basic horizon from which I derive meanings for my experience" (p.23). Different elements form parts of an individual's world, such as one's parents, friends and home. These elements fit together to form a whole, a pattern of coherence, which are intelligible to a person. Being-in-the-world is an individual's largest context from which he/she can understand his/her perceptions and actions. Also, according to Keen (1975) "Empathic being-in-the-world can be described as multi-centred, having other centres of meaning and origins of motivation that are nearly as vivid as oneself" (p. 49). This was evident in the study as forgiveness was associated with the subject's capacity to grasp the perpetrator's 'humanness.' This view implies a respect for others as well as an awareness of other's capacity to experience pain, anxiety and other human emotions. The individual who forgave was able to recognise emotions in the perpetrators. "*I saw a lot of controlled anger in them*" (Participant 3).

Thirdly, there also seems to be support for Madikizela's (2002) concept of rehumanisation in the empathy/forgiveness link. The basic idea is that for one individual to forgive another, he or she must construe that person as a human being rather than as someone who is 'all bad' or as a 'demon.' It was clear from the findings that those individuals who were unable to forgive construed their perpetrators as 'inhuman' or 'all bad.' For example, one participant's perception of his perpetrator is as follows: "*I think they're thugs and cowards. I cannot think of them as anything else but that. They're manipulative people. Um, you CANNOT see, you can't refer to them as animals, because there's some...good animals around! But it's barbaric, um, what they did*" (Participant 4). Another participant states: "*they are a completely unknown entity to me. They a phenomenon, they, they exist...But, which, um, isn't clearly defined to me. You know, there's just a stereotype, which they fit*" (Participant 6). In contrast, when an individual is able to recognise the humanness in his or her perpetrator he or she is more likely to forgive. For example, participant 3 describes his attackers as follows: "*I think the picture that I've got of them. I could see them as a father, you know. As a friend to people you know to human...And they were very well dressed guys, very well dressed and um, nice faces, you know they were good looking guys. They didn't look rough and scary and stuff you know...very decent looking men*" (Participant 3). Madikizela (2002) states 'I think that the act of forgiveness resists separating perpetrators from this network of human others and instead recognises that they are part of the same fabric and granting them forgiveness opens up relational possibilities" (p.13). Linked to the previous notion of one's lived world, it appears that an individual who forgives continues to exist in relationship to the perpetrators.

In addition empathy may contribute to forgiveness through an attempt to understand the context or whole person who has inflicted the pain (Fitzgibbons, 1986). This was true of the findings of this study, which suggest that one is more likely to forgive if one takes into account the perpetrator's circumstances and context when attempting to understand the transgression.

Object Relations Theory explains the phenomenon of dehumanisation or the inability to experience empathy for one's perpetrator as a manifestation of the defence of splitting. The ego rapidly responds to trauma by splitting in order to protect the weakened, damaged, vulnerable self. In this way the developing ego defensively reconnects with the "good" derived from the previous nurturant union with a good object, and splits the "painful" bad off projectively onto the offender, thereby creating a good-self bad-object split. Consequently, there is a complete qualitative distinction and spatial distance between the self and other. This difference or conceptual chasm makes it impossible for the individual to empathise with the perpetrator. Only an awareness of the perpetrators positive attributes and one's own shortcomings allows recognition of the offender as similar to the self. Otherwise the offender is like another species – a demon. And human beings do not forgive 'demons.' The failure to forgive is therefore a symptom of the primitive defence mechanism of splitting.

In Kernbergian terms forgiveness is as follows: "Someone has behaved destructively toward me (bad object representation), stimulating feelings of hate (connecting negative affect) in me (bad self-representation). At the same time I know that I have at times

behaved in ways, which are at least remotely similar (bad self-representation). The other person is a not a devil but a human being with hopes, virtues, wounds and struggles (good self and object representations) whom I can empathise with (connecting positive affect)” (Gartner, 1988, as cited in Doyle, 1999 p.23).

It is important to note that the process of splitting in the context of trauma does not imply that the individual has a character pathology. It is likely that even normal people exhibit the same kinds of hatred and splitting when under extremely stressful circumstances (Vitz and Mango, 1997). Pathology is distinguished from normality by the persistence of the splitting defence and its effects on an individual’s capacity to function effectively in life.

In the most severe cases of unforgiveness among the participants, a desire for revenge was openly expressed. In response to a traumatic injury imposed by another the subject feels unfairly and undeservedly aggressed by a cruel and malevolent object. “In response to this the subject blames the object and feels justified in his own retaliatory aggression towards the object, and in delusions of persecution so intense is the hatred and so justified may it feel, that the subject may launch an attack in self defence or retribution” (Hunter, 1978, p.169). “*If I recognised him in the street I would probably kill him*” (Participant 1).

5.2.4 Representation of the World and Life

As stated previously the world is where one exists most fundamentally and one's perception of where one is in the world contributes to the meanings one derives from experience. How the self is seen in the world (or who one is in the world) determines what aspects of the world are salient, what they mean to the self and how they will influence the meanings of events in one's experience. The findings of the present study revealed an association between the capacity to forgive and the way in which participant's construed the world and his/her life. It was found that those individuals who did not forgive seemed to experience the world and their lives as harsh, difficult and unrelenting. In addition, their lives seem to be devoid of meaning apart from their effort to buttress and reinforce their dominant self-representations as strong, powerful and needed. When looking at the participant who did forgive, one can see a different conceptualisation of his life and world. This participant is able to integrate and assimilate the threatening aspect of his world into his whole representation of it. In this way he is able to recognise both the negative and positive aspects of the world with the positive aspect being more central in his mind. He also describes his life as having meaning, purpose and pleasure. *"I think of it as a lot of opportunities and huge potential you know and love because I know that there is a lot of love ... You know and I just I see, I accept the evil element in the world... And I know there is nothing we can do to get rid of because I know it's been here from the beginning you know... it's about accepting something and then dealing with it. I think if you're gonna try destroy something that, you can't really, you're just gonna be knocking your head"* (Participant 3).

Consequently, as a result of the way in which the world was construed (as harsh, cruel and unrelenting) most participants who did not forgive became hypervigilant and incorporated safety and precautionary behaviours into their everyday lives in order to make their world more controllable, predictable and safe. *“As soon as I started taking control of things, I started being able to avoid situations and change my destiny or change or do all the things she said I couldn’t do”* (Participant 5).

Keen (1975) asserts that one’s world consists of three kinds of horizons or backdrops from which meaning is derived from experience, these are spatial, temporal and interpersonal. Firstly, one’s actions are orientated and structured within one’s concept of space. There are a number of attractions and repulsion’s, which seem to guide an individual’s behaviour or being-in-the-world. It can be argued that the space a victim occupies can be determined by his/her attraction to safety and control and his/her repulsion away from threat and uncertainty. Secondly, one’s behavioural space is related to one’s experience of time. This is seen in that space can be interpreted in terms of one’s anticipation of the future or one’s memory of the past or both. It seems that the victim’s space is influenced by both the future anticipation of an attack and the memory of the painful event. Therefore, both the past and the future permeate the victim’s present experience. Furthermore, one’s behaviour may be aimed at restructuring space, which can be seen in the victims’ attempt to make their world safe and predictable. This may also be done by limiting the amount of space they occupy in the world. Thirdly, space and time are also related to one’s interpersonal contracts, agreements, desires and hurts toward whom behaviour is orientated. Therefore, a victim’s hurts and disappointments

related to the painful experience may contribute to his/her attraction or repulsion toward or away from certain individuals (Keen, 1975). Therefore, “the spatial, temporal and interpersonal horizons control the perceptions and actions of a particular person in a particular situation” (Keen, 1975, p.29).

The unrealistic representation of the world and life prevents individuals from making meaning of their experience and life in general, while the presence of forgiveness is accompanied by the ability to think about an event realistically and provide one with a sense of purpose and meaning in life. Gassin and Enright's (1995) argument that forgiveness is a marker of positive psychological adjustment if one is able to find meaning in the process subsequent to experience of pain and loss seems to be confirmed with this study. A participant who did not forgive states: “*Ja, there's no point to it...You work to keep you alive, you go to school to get some work. And then you work to keep yourself alive. It's a circle that doesn't end*” (Participant 1). It seems that any meaning that comes from the experience may confront the individual with those things he/she is desperately trying to avoid (seeing the self as weak, vulnerable and flawed). In contrast, the individual who able to forgive was able to obtain meaning from the experience stating: “*I definitely re-looked at where I was in my life with relationships...I think I really reassessed my whole life definitely*” (Participant 3). This participant experienced improved reality testing, where the self and objects appear more clearly separated and the relationship between them is more realistically assessed.

5.2.5 Personal Relationships

Certain patterns were evident in comparing the personal relationships of those who did forgive to those who did not. Those participants who did not forgive seemed to experience a breakdown in some of their relationships partly due to an inability to trust.

“So I lost a lot of respect for people like that. Just in general. They just same that’s that Ja that was a lot of friends I lost, I could not be bothered to see them any more”

(Participant 1). The participant who did forgive experienced a deeper connection and meaningfulness in relationships. *“I enjoy people allot so I don’t battle starting up a new friendship, I’ve got a couple of close friends that I can really share things with you know...Awesome relationships, very very healthy”* (Participant 3). Pingleton (1997) argues that the capacity for forgiveness is accompanied by the ability to form new relationships or adjust old ones.

There also seemed to be a pattern of idealising one parent and devaluing the other in the majority participants who did not forgive. *“I learnt to hate my mother for what she did over the years... I love my dad very much”* (Participant 5). The participant who forgave describes his relationship with his parents as central in his life and sees himself as intimately connected and attached to both of them. Here again the notion of splitting can be used to explain this occurrence.

In addition, results revealed that an inability to forgive is associated with a persons striving to see him/herself as independent and as someone whom their significant others

need. On the other hand forgiveness seems to be associated with the ability to admit and express one's need for significant others. This seems to be linked to the fact that individuals who do not forgive seem to see themselves as responsible and in control. In addition, it would appear that individuals who do not forgive struggle to accept or integrate any perception of their own weakness and would rather see themselves as needed rather than in need of others.

5.3 The Experience of Forgiveness/Unforgiveness

The findings of this study did not pin point an exact step-by-step process, neatly packaged in which the forgiveness/unforgiveness process occurred. However, from the summarised experience of forgiveness and unforgiveness, common processes and dynamics emerged in those who did not forgive which appeared different to the participant who did forgive. These unfolding processes and dynamics will be illuminated with the use of Object Relations Theory. Specifically, we will examine the defence of splitting, which seems to be a central core around which the forgiveness and unforgiveness process revolves.

Previous research (Enright and the Human Development study Group, 1994, Fow, 1996 Linn & Linn, 1978 and Truong, 1991 as cited in Sells and Hargrave, 1998) suggests that certain steps occur before a certain shift in thinking occurs and the individual then chooses to forgive or not to forgive. "The critical dimension of forgiving is that one experiences a shift in one's understanding of and relationship to the other person, oneself

and the world...there is an experience of reclaiming oneself, which at the same time, involves a *shift* into a larger perspective” (Fow, 1996, p.228). The findings of this research seem to question the notion of a shift to some extent. It appeared that participants who were unable to forgive required a shift in thinking in order to forgive. However, the participant who did forgive seemed to possess the capacity to maintain a larger perspective and a realistic perception of himself, others and the world and this is what allowed him to forgive. This would suggest that forgiveness may constitute an individual’s personality makeup. This supports Pingleton’s (1997) argument that forgiveness is not a natural instinctive tendency but rather it is cultivated, acquired or developed within one’s personality structure.

According to Hunter (1978) the process of forgiveness appears to follow a recognisable and predictable course. Enright and the Human Development Study Group’s (1991 as cited in Enright and the Human Development Study Group, 1994) proposed pathway of forgiveness gained some support from the data, however certain elements may require reconceptualisation. The findings of this study support the basic pathway or constituents of forgiveness, indicating that those with unforgiveness are stuck at a point where they cannot empathise with the perpetrator, while those with pseudo-forgiveness seemed to be locked at an earlier stage where they continue to distance themselves from the perpetrator and therefore do not allow the following healing process to proceed. However, when it comes to the process where an individual does forgive, Enright and the Human Development Study Group’s (1991 as cited in Enright and the Human Development Study Group, 1994) theory assumes that forgiveness occurs at a specific point and

precedes the victim's ability to empathise with the perpetrator. However, the findings of this study seemed to suggest that the individual's perception of the perpetrator is what allowed him to forgive in the first place. In the case of the individuals who did not forgive it appears that a shift is required in order to forgive

According to Hebl and Enright (1993), the initial step toward forgiveness involves the shedding of psychological defences or an ability to admit that one was hurt by another and is therefore angry. The findings of this study support this initial step. It was found that subjects who were unable to forgive attempted to distance themselves from the perpetrator by not thinking about or acknowledging emotion, in particular anger, toward their offender. According to Hebl and Enright (1993), an individual who does not forgive avoids confrontation of the hurtful event but instead uses psychological defences.

Pseudo-forgiveness, as the concept implies, refers to a form of forgiveness that is false as it does not involve integration but rather employs a variety of defences in order to ward off anxiety. In some cases individuals may believe they have forgiven but have in fact not proceeded past the first step in the forgiveness process. In some cases splitting is maintained as the perpetrator is viewed as wholly bad, while oneself is seen as wholly good. This type of forgiveness serves only to reinforce one's moral superiority and is evidence of reaction formation. Reaction formation is seen when hateful feelings are replaced by loving feelings rather than integrated with them. Projection is also likely to occur where the bad self-representation or the self who feels hateful is projected and in some cases not owned at all. Therefore hostility is maintained. The wounded psyche will

attempt to protect itself from further hurt or loss by adopting extropunitive rage (Pingleton, 1997). Initially these defences may prove to be adaptive in establishing separation individuation, however are severely maladaptive if prolonged. However, the negative emotions of resentment, blame and hostility associated with splitting ultimately weaken rather than empower the self.

In this study, it was found that forgiveness was associated with integrating and accepting one's own self-representation of fragility and weakness rather than distancing oneself from it or defending against it. In this way forgiveness appears to be an interpersonal as well as an intrapsychic process, which allows an individual to accept oneself in spite of an awareness of one's failures. The individual was able to confront and admit his weakness without attempting to escape it.

It was evident from the findings that the majority of participants who did not forgive seemed to experience intense fear, evident both in their expression and behaviour. The paranoid orientation of these individuals stems from the projection onto others of their own sadism (Vitz and Mango, 1997). Some participants became extremely cautious and others felt like prisoners. It therefore seems that one of the cells in the prison of unforgiveness is paranoid anxiety. Pingleton (1997) suggests that the price of cognitive distortion is to be persecuted by the devil one has created namely paranoid anxiety. *“Like wherever I go, even though it doesn't look like it I know where every one is walking around me, just to make sure I will never get into that situation again. Very aware of everyone around me. I'm looking for anyone that's looking to make a move on some*

one...” (Participant 1). *“I’m always looking. I never, I always watch everyone...I’m very very very anxious, I’m always, I never relax”*(Participant 5). It appears that victims who did not forgive seemed to be ‘living into the future’, in anticipation or fear of a further attack. Therefore, the way in which a victim construes his/her future, as either painful or pleasant, seems to penetrate his/her present, giving it direction and meaning (Keen, 1975).

According to Vitz and Mango (1997) anger is a common human emotion and is a natural response to any form of perceived attack, hurt or threat. Therefore anger is normal and appropriate rather than pathological. This anger may transform into ongoing resentment or even hatred. It was found that both participants who forgave and who did not forgive experienced anger but interestingly those who experienced pseudo-forgiveness did not seem to acknowledge this anger or express it directly toward their offender. *“Not anger ja. Not angry at them just want revenge”* (Participant 1). This seems consistent with the definition of pseudo-forgiveness, where the victim does not acknowledge that he or she has been hurt by the offender and therefore cannot express or understand feelings of anger toward the offender.

Results also indicated that individuals who did not forgive experienced a behavioural change in order to ward off the anxiety associated with their weak self-representation. The behavioural change was possibly unconscious as the weak self-representation continues to be denied. In particular, avoidance was used where participants distanced themselves from people, thoughts and situations that served to remind them of the traumatic event. *“Just bury it. You just forget. Nothing reminds me of it anymore*

so..except her” (Participant 1). In addition, some participants seemed to banish the perpetrator from their conscious mind. On the other hand forgiveness was associated with a tendency to express and explore their sense of vulnerability rather than avoid it.

It was evident from the findings that the participants who did not forgive seemed to experience a feeling of being trapped in the past or of being held by something or holding onto something. However, this was not the case with individual who did forgive. Vitz and Mango (1997) define forgiveness as a person’s conscious decision to give up resentment and any claims for redress from someone who has hurt him or her. “When we set an offender free from their indebtedness to us, it liberates both of us. It looses them from the bondage of guilt and us from the entrapment of revenge. Conversely, when ever we do not forgive, it binds both of us” (Pingleton, 1997, p.410). Therefore here we can see that a victim’ s memory of the painful event provides a backdrop of his/her present experience of event and structure of experience. Therefore the victim who does not forgive may be living in the past, in his/her memories of the painful experience.

As seen in McCullough et al’s (1998) study, a number of participants who did not forgive seemed to experience hatred for their offenders. Anger and hatred are different constructs in that hatred is not an immediate reaction but rather is dependent upon the cultivation of anger. This may explain further the role of rumination in leading to the desire for revenge. Cognitive structures are created by the development of hatred, which continue to produce anger and negativity thereby resulting in pathology (Sells and Hargrave, 1998, Vitz and Mango, 1997). Hatred serves to defend the narcissism of the

psyche. Firstly, hatred protects the self from the depressing and humiliating reality of painful memories and affects and is aimed at warding off underlying hurt and sadness. Secondly, it protects the individual from making him/herself vulnerable in the context of a loving relationship, as the expression of hatred tends to distance others. In addition, reality is distorted by hatred through splitting, as it keeps a person from recognising him/herself as having serious flaws and others as having positive attributes. Fourthly, one is able to maintain victim status and defend one's narcissism by rationalising. Furthermore, and most importantly, a person's narcissism or pride is strongly defended by hatred, contributing to an attitude of moral superiority by seeing the self as all good. "Hatred and revenge provide purpose in life and make people feel alive and powerful" (Vitz and Mango, 1997, p.70).

Kernberg (1991) states that the cognitive aspect of hatred, which includes powerful rationalisations, is chronic and stable and exists on a continuum of mild, moderate and severe forms. Hatred becomes pathological, not as an isolated response to attack, but when it is a chronic characterological predisposition. Primitive hatred attempts to destroy the capacity to perceive things realistically as well as the capacity to communicate and form intimate relationships. Under conditions of intense hatred a person's capacity for self-awareness is completely eliminated (Kernberg, 1991). This seems to keep the person locked into a split world of isolation and entrapment in the past.

This section addressed some of the important theoretical implications arising from the findings. The comparison table (Appendix D) was employed as a point of reference in

creating a dialogue between the findings and the literature on forgiveness. Specifically, the findings were discussed from the point of view of an Object Relations framework. The core of the discussion entailed a comparison of the victims who did forgive with those who did not.

5.4 Comparison of This Study with Those Investigating Intimate Relationships

This study serves to support the majority of the findings of forgiveness research within intimate relationships. However, there are some differences, which are interesting to note.

Firstly, this study supports the finding that forgiveness is associated with humility (Worthington, 1998) rather than seeing the self as superior to one's perpetrator or others. Secondly, the link between empathy and forgiveness was supported, however some of the variables thought to mediate this link were not. Forgiveness was found to be associated with the ability to empathise with perpetrator and to relate to him/her. There was also some support for the role of attributions in this link, suggesting that forgiveness is associated with taking the perpetrator's circumstances into account rather than seeing evil as internal to him/her. However, Weiner et al's (1997) finding that attribution was a function of confession by the offender did not gain support, as there was no opportunity for this to occur. The findings of this study suggest that forgiveness also occurs in the absence of a confession. Similarly, research explaining the link between empathy and forgiveness as a function of apology (McCullough et al. 1997, Girard and Mullet, 1997)

did not gain support. Results from this study suggest that forgiveness and/or empathy are not necessarily related to the presence of an apology. In addition, the role of relationship level variables (Girard and Mullet, 1997; McCullough et al 1997, McCullough et al. 1998) such as the closeness of the relationship between the offender and victim and the level of satisfaction of that relationship was not confirmed. Results suggest that forgiveness and empathy are present even in the absence of intimacy and dyadic satisfaction. Furthermore, most of the research within the context of intimate relationships sees empathy and consequently forgiveness as a result of a shift in perception of the perpetrator. This study seems to suggest that a shift is not always necessary for the presence of forgiveness. Thirdly, there was some support for the role of one's personality in the capacity for forgiveness (Walker and Gorsuch, 2002), which seemed to be inconsistent with the majority of research in intimate relationships.

Therefore it is apparent that although this research did serve to confirm and support the findings of previous research within intimate relationships, there were some divergences worth considering.

5.5 Theoretical Conclusions

The current study demonstrated that forgiveness/unforgiveness can be understood in Object Relations terms. Several theoretical conclusions, based on an Object Relations perspective, can be drawn from the results of this study. Object Relations Theory is a complex psychodynamic approach, which assumes that one's internalised representations of interpersonal relationships is the backdrop against which one's current experience

obtains meaning. In this way this theory assumes that an individual's level of intrapsychic and interpersonal development will influence an individual's capacity to forgive in the context of psychological injury and trauma. This view asserts that a failure in the capacity to forgive may be seen "as causally linked to or emanating from specific arrests in one's intrapsychic and interpersonal development" (Pingleton, 1997, p.407).

Firstly, forgiveness is associated with the capacity to integrate and accept one's weak, fragile and bad self-representation into one's whole self. Unforgiveness on the other hand is significantly related to the process of splitting, in which the victim is unable to integrate their negative self-representation but rather splits it off and projects it onto the perpetrator. Gartner (1988 as cited in Pingleton, 1997) asserts that forgiveness of others is related to forgiveness of the self. In order to forgive others one must forgive oneself by integrating one's good and bad self-representations in the same way as one integrates one's good and bad object representations.

Secondly, seeing others as diverse, complex and integrated human beings, with both positive and negative attributes is associated with the ability to forgive. However, representing others as either extremely good (angels) or bad (demons) tends to be associated with unforgiveness.

Thirdly, the victim's inability to experience empathy or forgiveness for his/her perpetrator is seen as a manifestation of the defence of splitting, in that the victim is only conscious of the negative representation of the perpetrator. In splitting reality is distorted

and the subject is only able to perceive the object as all bad. The defense of projection is also used where the bad self-representation (the self which has been wounded and feels hatred) is projected onto the other or to a group. Consequently, the person continually endures persecution from the 'evil being' he/she has constructed. "Instead of facing the existential fear of non-being underlying one's vulnerable, weakened, powerless condition which potentiated the hurt or loss, the wounded psyche falsely empowers itself with extropunitive rage in an effort to protect itself from further injury" (Pingleton, 1997, p. 409).

Forgiveness necessitates that capacity to abandon one's egocentric tendency to see others primarily in terms of one's own desires and wishes (Crabb, 1988 as cited in Pingleton, 1997). Adequately coping with the paradoxical tension, which surrounds one's simultaneous connectedness and separateness in relation to others, is essential to facilitate mature forgiveness. In this way forgiveness arises out of the realisation that all human's, including oneself, possess the capacity for evil or 'badness.'

5.6 Implications of the Study

The present study contributes empirical data to the expanding body of literature on forgiveness/unforgiveness. There are a number of practical implications of the present study. Firstly, this study may prove beneficial in devising effective and informed methods of psychotherapeutic intervention, extending from short term debriefing and crisis counselling to more longer term intervention, particularly psychoanalysis. Clients

and clinicians who have a better understanding of the dynamics of forgiveness are more likely to reach the goal of forgiveness and consequent psychological healing and restoration. For instance, the therapist should encourage and facilitate a more realistic view of their offender as well as themselves in order to bring about the goal of forgiveness.

In addition, implications may extend to the wider social and political arenas, specifically in South Africa with regard to conflict resolution. For instance this research can be used to inform guidelines for promoting reconciliation and involvement in interventions like the Truth and Reconciliation Commission TRC (du Toit, 1998). An intervention like the TRC can potentially counteract the victim's all bad perception of the perpetrator by contributing to a real situation in which the perpetrator can be seen (rather than one's all bad representation of the perpetrator). This provides the victim with an opportunity to form a further representation of the perpetrator in a different context (Tutu, 1999).

In connection with this, the research may inform and illuminate the study of racism as well as devising strategies to counteract racism and prejudice. For instance this study reveals that unforgiveness is associated with creating a generalised representation or stereotype of one's perpetrator based on his or her physical characteristics.

Consequently, forgiveness may facilitate a process to counteract prejudice and racism by contributing to a realistic perception of the perpetrator and those similar to him/her physically.

Furthermore, there may be pastoral or spiritual implications with regard to the understanding of forgiveness and for the practice of pastoral counselling and education.

It is clear that forgiveness is a phenomenon with many facets and far reaching implications for intrapersonal, interpersonal and wider social and political relationships, which warrants rigorous attention.

6. CONCLUSION

6.1 Summary

Although forgiveness has been relatively sidelined in psychological research in the past, psychologists have begun to recognise its relevance and importance within the psychological sciences. The investigation of forgiveness within close interpersonal relationships formed the bulk of previous research. In addition, the typical methodology focused on the measurement and observation of forgiveness leaving the experience and dynamics of forgiveness relatively unexplored. Consequently, two major gaps in the research were identified including the investigation of forgiveness within non-intimate interpersonal relationships and the processes of change that occurs when an individual forgives or does not forgive. The present study has served to continue the quest in the understanding and meaning of the experience of forgiveness. The aim of the present study was to unearth some of the unanswered questions surrounding the construct of forgiveness/unforgiveness by investigating the meaning or lived experience of forgiveness/unforgiveness. A group of individuals who had experienced trauma at the hand of another, specifically violent crime, formed the research sample. In an attempt to address these questions a phenomenological research design was employed. Results supported previous research, which demonstrated that forgiveness is a very rare occurrence (Pingleton, 1997). The most notable findings from the study demonstrated that there is an observable difference in the way in which individuals who forgave represent themselves, others, the world and their perpetrator compared to those who did not forgive. Specifically, those who did not forgive were unable to integrate their fragile weak self-representation into their whole self, while those who did forgive were able to

do this. In addition, unforgiveness was associated with a representation of the perpetrator which was an inherently evil ‘monster,’ construed as ‘all bad,’ while forgiveness was associated with seeing the perpetrator in a more holistic way, with both good and bad attributes and taking the circumstances into account. In order to comprehensively grasp or conceptualise the experience of forgiveness, a psychodynamic Object Relations perspective was introduced. Incorporating key aspects of Object Relations Theory it was observed that unforgiveness seemed to be associated with the defence mechanism of splitting, in which one has extreme representations of the self and others rather than holistic and realistic perceptions.

6.2 Limitations of the study

There are a number of limitations of the study that are important to recognise and acknowledge. Firstly, the size of the sample may be too small to generalize the results to the wider population. However, this was not the goal of the study. Secondly, the composition of the sample may have been biased, as a large proportion of the sample were members of the Christian faith. This may also impact on the generalizability of the results to more diverse wider population. In addition, insufficient data related the participant’s developmental history was elicited in order to examine more fully the psychodynamic structures and variables of forgiveness/unforgiveness. More information in this area might be required in order to better inform the results and the discussion. Fourth, the primary task of each participant was to describe his or her own experience including, feelings, thoughts and behaviour in connection with an incident in which they

had been criminally victimized. Although the research question attempted to focus on the participant's actual experience, many of the participants tended to speak more theoretically when talking about the phenomenon of forgiveness rather than from their own experience. Consequently, insufficient information regarding the participant's actual experience of forgiveness or unforgiveness was obtained as a result of some participants speaking in theory about forgiveness rather than their experience. This may be avoided in future by attempting to frame questions in such a way as to bring the participants back to their actual experience. In addition, social desirability may have been present in some of the interviews as a large proportion of the participants were affiliated with the Christian religion, which encourages forgiveness. The research question requires in-depth self-knowledge and some participants may have struggled to articulate their experience particularly if they had not thought about it previously. Consequently, more than one interview with each participant may have facilitated the expression and articulation of their experience. Another limitation was that only one participant forgave. A greater number of participants who have actually forgiven, are required in order to enrich the understanding of forgiveness.

6.3 Recommendations for Future Research

There are many questions still to be addressed in the area of forgiveness/unforgiveness and this study has served to stimulate new questions. It is hoped that future research and theorising will be generated by this study. The following suggestions are aimed to extend and complement research in the area of forgiveness/unforgiveness.

First, a study using a greater number of subjects may prove to be beneficial in order to explore other possible dimensions of the experience of forgiveness that may have not been present in the current participants protocols. In addition, it would be beneficial to diversify the demographic characteristics within the sample in order to ensure representatives on the basis of spirituality and religious affiliation. It would also be beneficial to include in the sample a greater number of participants have forgiven. A longitudinal study incorporating a follow up over time may also shed some light on the process of forgiveness within a single individual.

Third, future research may wish to explore further the spiritual dimensions of forgiveness within the context of criminal victimization. These may include an exploration into participant's image or representation of God and the role these representations have on the capacity to forgive. McCullough and Worthington (1999) argue that "forgiveness has deep spiritual roots and links to religious functioning"(p. 1160).

In addition, future research may focus on racism within the context of violent crime and the various dynamics of forgiveness and unforgiveness. It appears from the findings in this study that unforgiveness is associated with the tendency to generalise one's perpetrator into a category. In addition, this entire category is then seen as all bad. It would therefore be interesting to investigate the role of unforgiveness/forgiveness in the context of racism.

Furthermore researchers may wish to investigate the role of Object Relations in depth by using life histories of participant included in the study.

Interdisciplinary studies in which socio-political processes inform psychoanalysis and vice versa are required in order to enrich one's understanding of phenomena related to forgiveness, racism and conflict resolution (Akhtar, 2002). For instance as mentioned earlier, interventions like the TRC which encourage the confrontation of the offender and victim in a safe environment may counteract distorted and unrealistic representations. This allows the victim to see the offender's humanity, pain and remorse which may facilitate empathy and counteract dehumanisation (Madikizela, 2002).

Another gap in research pertains to the role of culture in forgiveness and how cross-cultural variations impact on the capacity for forgiveness/unforgiveness. There may be an association in the way in which different cultures see themselves in relation to others. For instance one may predict that more western cultures, which emphasise independence and individuality, may be less inclined to forgive as a result of seeing oneself as different to others and their perpetrator. In contrast, a culture which emphasises community and interdependence may be more inclined to see as themselves as originating from the same fabric as their perpetrator and therefore be more likely to forgive.

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8. Appendices

8.1 Appendix A: Letter to Potential Participants

30 March 2003

Dear Potential Participant

**RE: RESEARCH INTO PSYCHOLOGY AND COPING WITH THE
EFFECTS OF VIOLENT CRIME**

My name is Nicola Fanner and I am currently completing my Psychology Masters Degree at the School of Psychology at the University of Natal, Pietermaritzburg. I have decided to submit my thesis (research report) in the area of psychology and the process of coping with the experience of violent crime, focusing specifically in the area of forgiveness/unforgiveness. My research is aimed at investigating and describing the meaning of forgiveness/unforgiveness in victims of violent crime. I would greatly appreciate it if you would take part in the study. Participation does not necessarily require that individuals have experienced forgiveness toward their perpetrators, as forgiveness is a complex and controversial issue, particularly within the context of violent crime. I am interested in the process of coping with the violation and feelings toward the perpetrator.

Participation involves taking part in a personal, non-threatening interview with me the researcher, about the process of coping with the experience of violent crime. The interview will be recorded and transcribed. Efforts will be made to ensure confidentiality (my supervisor, Professor Graham Lindegger PHD will have access to the material) and data obtained will be stored safely. I will contact you in the near future or you may kindly reply, via email or telephone.

Thank you very much.
Kind regards,

Nicola Fanner (033 3867517 or 072 268 3743 or email: nixfan@mweb.co.za)

8.2 Appendix B: Consent Form

CONSENT FOR TAKING PART IN RESEARCH

I hereby give my consent to take part in the psychological research undertaken by Nicola Fanner (Clinical M1 student psychologist) and understand the purpose and procedure of the research, which is explained in the attached letter.

Name:.....

Signature:.....

Date:.....

As Witness:.....

Signature:.....

Date:.....

8.3 Appendix C: Guidelines for Interview Questions

1. Would you like to begin by telling me about the incident in which you were criminally victimised?
2. How did the event impact your life?
3. How did the event effect your personal relationships?
4. How did you cope?
 5. Tell me about the feelings you experienced in connection with the event?
 6. What did you think and feel after the incident?
Has this changed?
7. How do you see the perpetrator?
8. If the participant expresses forgiveness:
 - Could you tell me about the process you went through in order to forgive the person/ could you tell me about how you came to forgive the person?
 - How did you experience the process?
 - Have your feelings toward the perpetrator changed?
 - How have your feelings toward the perpetrator changed since you have forgiven him/her?
 - How do you see the perpetrator as an individual?
 - How did you see the perpetrator before you forgave him/her?
 - If there is a change, how do you account for this change?
9. If the participant has not forgiven:
 - What prevented you from forgiving the person? What has influenced your decision not to forgive?
 - Have your feelings toward the offender changed in any way since the violation?
 - Has the way in which you perceive the offender changed since the violation?
 - How do you see the offender as a person?
 - Has the way in which you perceived, felt and thought about the event changed at all? Explain

8.4 Appendix D: Summary Comparison Table of Results

In the table below the findings of each subject (1-6) in the study are shown in each column. The column indicates the number of the participant and his or her status with regard to forgiveness, unforgiveness or pseudo-forgiveness. Each row of the table summarises a particular section of the research findings for each participant.

Table 1: Before Victimization

| SUBJECT | 1 (UNFORGIVENESS) | 2 (PSEUDO-FORGIVENESS) | 3 (FORGIVENESS) | 4 (UNFORGIVENESS) | 5 (UNFORGIVENESS) | 6 (PSEUDO-FORGIVENESS) |
|----------------------------|--|---|--|---|---|---|
| Self-representation | His self-representation is one of a strong, responsible, heroic, helpful man. | R experiences herself as an active, independent, giver and strong woman. | G construes himself as having both good and bad attributes contributing to an integrated view of himself. However his dominant self-representation is largely positive . He also sees | He sees himself as trusting. E construes himself as strong, reliable, good and helpful . | S sees himself as in control as well as anxious and unable to relax. He sees himself as independent and self-sufficient . | C sees herself as safe. However, at some level she is aware of potential danger. C is largely conscious of herself as safe, powerful, secure . |

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| | | | himself as interdependent with and intimately connected to others, both physically and spiritually. | | | |
| Representation of others | The good nature of people seems to dominate P's consciousness, enabling him to trust others to a large extent. He sees others as objects he is responsible for . | R views others as individuals whom she can attend to and help . R equates goodness in others with strength and giving. She seems to label others as good or bad. She seems to categorise others. | G sees others as whole individuals, consisting of multiple intricacies including both good and bad aspects . In addition, he sees context as crucial in the understanding of people. G is also conscious of others around him and sees himself as being able to relate openly with them. | E sees others as basically good and in need of his help . | S sees others as disappointing as well as not caring for him. He construes others as untrustworthy and deceptive . | C construes herself as trusting of others. |
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| Representation of life and the world | He sees the world as a relatively safe place. | Not consciously aware of the negative element of the world, although at some level knows it exists. | G has a largely positive view of the world without denying the negative aspect of it. | He seems to be largely conscious of the world as safe. | He experiences his world as harsh, unpredictable and chaotic. | C was conscious of potential danger or threat but did not anticipate an attack C sees life as difficult. |
| Personal relationships | P views his girl friend as someone whom he can protect and who will reinforce his strong masculine self-representation. | R admires her mother for her ability to give but never to receive. R sees her father as a kind and loving man. R construes her relationship with her family as pleasant and her family as in need of her. | G values his personal relationships and sees himself as having a strong connection to both his parents as well as to his close friends. G sees himself as being loved and cared for by his significant others. | He sees himself as being important to the ones he cares about through his ability to care for provide and protect them as well as for his helpfulness. He sees himself as similar to his mother and opposite to his father. Seems to idealise his mother and devalue his father. | S sees himself as victimised by his mother and is angry with her. He sees her as cruel, harsh and critical. He seems to see his father in a positive light as gentle and good. In addition he sees himself as closed to others and experiences difficulty in developing intimacy in relationships. | C expresses a lack of connection to both her parents. She is terrified of her father and sees herself as distanced from her mother. She sees her father as irresponsible, unreliable and neglectful and her mother as good and loving. |

Table 2: After Victimization with or without Forgiveness

| SUBJECT | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
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| Self-representation | P's attempts to forget the event by avoiding the attackers and the girl and burying his feelings and thoughts associated with it. He attempts to rebuild his shattered self-perception by constructing the event as something that made him stronger, wiser and more responsible rather than as something that wounded him. He seems unable to integrate his self- | R has developed a number of strategies, which are aimed at disconnecting and dissociating herself from the event and its consequences. These include denying any negative emotion resulting from the event such as fear and anger, focusing solely on the positive aspects of life and avoiding any material that may remind her of the event by keeping busy . These strategies have served to | G is able to integrate both the good and bad aspects of himself and construes himself as a whole person. G's positive self-representation of strength is dominant . However, he is also able to accept and express a new sense of his fragility and vulnerability . | E experiences fear and a failure in his self-representation as a protecting and strong husband and father. In addition, he attempts to reclaim his sense of control and power by avoiding emotions and being distracted by work and activity . He construes emotion and despair as an indication of weakness, which further threatens to erode his self- | S experienced intense fear and paranoid anxiety as he has a heightened consciousness of threat and attempts to be more cautious and alert in order to prevent re-traumatisation. In order to combat these feelings, S incorporated routines and behaviour into his life in order to make it safe and controllable and to prevent re-traumatisation and avoid consciousness of | S sees herself as vulnerable and threatened. She experienced intense fear and incorporated safety behaviours into her lifestyle to prevent re-traumatisation and to combat the anxiety. In order to re-establish a sense of control and prevent re-victimisation, C attempts to make her world as safe and predictable as possible. In addition C seems to see herself as responsible for |

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| | <p>representations of vulnerability and helplessness into his whole self. This is associated with feelings of guilt. P attempts to construct his hypervigilance as a heroic effort to protect others. He places his self-representation in direct contrast to others, who are selfish and uncaring</p> | <p>buttress her dominant self-representation, while eradicating any indication of a self-representation to the contrary. Further strategies include a more insistent focus on others. R struggles to express fear or emotion, as he perceives this as being weak. She is accustomed to a self-representation, which is tough and self-sufficient. R constructs the event as something that she has struggled with but that has made her stronger.</p> | | <p>representation. He is unable to integrate them into his self-representation and experiences underlying feelings of guilt for failing to protect his family and for failing to live up to and maintain his dominant self-representation. This fuels his desire to take revenge against the attackers. She sees herself as having to be strong in an ongoing battle.</p> | <p>his weaker self-representation. However, these strategies have come at a cost, as S is unable to relax, is constantly alert and suspicious of others. In this way S is able to reconstruct a strong, self sufficient and powerful self-representation. S cannot tolerate being out of control. He also seems to see himself as deficient, strange and out of place in the world. This may give him a sense of strength and control in order to fight against his feelings of vulnerability,</p> | <p>being victimised due to her own actions implying feelings of guilt. In this way she further attempts to reinforce a self-representation of control. C seems to reassert her powerful and in control self-representation by learning not to give in to her emotions.</p> |
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| | | She prefers to avoid these feelings, which bring her into contact with her feeling of weakness and therefore does not think about it. | | | fear and helplessness | |
| Representation of others | There has been a major shift in P's representation of others into a definite split between good and bad. P sees human nature as inherently selfish . P is therefore highly critical of others and has less respect for people since the event. P sees the majority of people as bad, | R seems to split her world into good and bad people. Consequently she lives in a persecutory world existing of ' monsters, ' which threaten to attack her causing her to be cautious and suspicious of those around her. Furthermore, she also experiences a deep resentment and | G becomes conscious of and accepts the fragility of humans in general . He experiences a deeper commonality with others, which enables him to relate to others more easily and to empathise with them. | E tends to polarise certain groups of individuals as either good or bad . He sees the police as a whole as neglectful and incompetent. He views his close friends and family as caring and concerned and he construes the church leaders as hypocritical and false. In this way he splits | S seems to construe the police as neglectful and incompetent. She sees others as unconcerned, untrustworthy and unreliable . He expects to be disappointed by others and therefore attempts to be self-sufficient. However, this independent stance makes it difficult for | C sees others as untrustworthy and potentially dangerous, consequently making her suspicious and fearful of others. C feels the attack has made her more conscious of the reality of human beings and robbed her of her naiveté. She experiences most others as threatening and |

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| | shallow and selfish. He finds it very difficult to trust others. | hostility toward black men, which is evident in her behaviour towards them. | | them into good and bad. | others to relate and care for him. Consequently, this produces an underlying bitterness and contempt for people as well as eroding his confidence and self esteem. In addition, he sees all people as potential attackers, enhancing his paranoid anxiety and safety precautions (guardedness). | dishonest and only a handful as potentially good and helpful. |
| Representation of the perpetrators | P seems reluctant to acknowledge his anger toward the criminals as this would expose his sense of victimisation and vulnerability but | R continues to identify her perpetrator as the entire male black race rather than a single individual (generalise). She is reluctant to admit anger toward her | G construes the perpetrators as being dangerous as well as professional, fluent and reasonable. G is able to empathise with the attackers and | E sees the attackers as brutal, irrational and calculating. He discounts the possibility of circumstances in the attackers actions. He sees | His co-worker is seen as the real perpetrator. He seems to see him as all bad and is unable to empathise with him. He distances himself from | She construes the attacker some kind of omnipotent being like a 'demon' rather than a human. This intensifies her fear of re-traumatisation as |

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| | <p>communicates his feeling as a strong desire to have revenge against them in order to preserve a sense of control rather than helplessness. P constructs the perpetrators as individuals who are inherently evil because they chose to do wrong. P feels that they are completely responsible for their actions and cannot blame anyone or any circumstance. P sees the perpetrators as completely bad (demonised), which makes it impossible for him to forgive</p> | <p>perpetrator, however she exhibits contempt and fear for all male members of the race her perpetrator represents. She has constructed a division between herself and them (race which her perpetrators represents). She is therefore unable to completely relate to them but seems to tolerate them. She seems to split off black men as bad in her consciousness and therefore cannot relate to them and fears them.</p> | <p>to see both good and bad elements within them. He is therefore able to relate to them. G is able to acknowledge the perpetrators as whole individuals with multiple roles including fathers, criminals and children. He also construes the perpetrators as acting out of a need and as a result of their circumstances, rather than as inherently evil. Therefore he does not see their motive as deliberately malicious.</p> | <p>them as inhuman and below animals making them ‘monsters’ in his mind, which makes it impossible to relate to them or to contemplate feeling emotion towards them. He construes them as being ‘all bad.’ E has deep anger and hatred toward the perpetrators and expresses a desire to kill them. He sees the perpetrators as completely opposite to himself.</p> | <p>the attackers thereby making it impossible to experience emotion toward them. This distancing mechanism may serve to minimise the harm they can inflict upon him. S seems to place more responsibility on his co-worker rather than with the perpetrator. He sees himself as opposite to the perpetrators in this way he sees himself as good and his co-worker as bad. He seems to harbour resentment and contempt toward his co-worker.</p> | <p>she defines him as an unknown entity, which continues to cause her intense fear after her escape. C seems to distance herself from the perpetrator by focusing on the weapon. C has developed a stereotype of criminals, which continues to torment her. However, she does take into account their context and seems to be conscious of the suffering and circumstance of the attacker. C is able to empathise with them as she construes them</p> |
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| | them or relate to them. | | | | | as a victim of circumstance. C feels a sense of resentment toward the way they act rather than toward the individual. |
| Representation of the world and life | P's world is now filled with potential perpetrators and is construed as threatening . Precautionary behaviours are incorporated, constraining his world in terms of space and time . P sees his life as being hard as he feels alone. He views life as an endless, pointless cycle with no meaning . The only meaning in | Heightened consciousness of threat in her world inhabited by generalized representation of 'monsters'. Consequently, she experiences a confusing world devoid of meaning . R seems to live a constrained, restricted existence in a world of danger and "persecutory devils" | The event has lead to a heightened consciousness of threat and danger in the world. However, he is able to integrate both good aspects (happiness, fun, laughter) and the bad (tragedy, danger) of his world and situation. He construes the event as a consequence of both the good and evil aspects of the world and | E struggles with contemplating the meaning of the event as this may challenge his character and remind him of his failed self-representation. E experiences a heightened consciousness of threat in his world. In addition he experiences the world as harsh, unrelenting, persecutory, threatening and unpredictable . Consequently, | He has experienced a loss of security since the attack as he is has a heightened consciousness of danger in the world. S seems to be conscious of a higher purpose or meaning to his survival. He wants to prevent trauma in the lives of others. S construes life as difficult and harsh, chaotic and unpredictable . | C sees the world as a dangerous and threatening place. C sees the justice system as hostile and unhelpful. She therefore takes precaution to be safe. Her world has become constricted and restricted . C sees the attack as a coincidence or as a function of circumstances rather than having meaning in her life. Therefore her world is |

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| | <p>life is to live up to his dominant self-representation. He expresses deep hostility and a desire for violence against the world but at the same time wants to protect his self-representation.</p> | | <p>as purposeful and having meaning.</p> | <p>his life is experienced as a battle that he has to continue with no rest or relief. This ultimately leads to a restriction of his world in terms of time and space by incorporating safety measures.</p> | <p>S experiences a constriction in his world in terms of space and time.</p> | <p>experienced as harsh, restricted and constricted and she lives in expectation of danger.</p> |
| <p>Personal relationships</p> | <p>P continues to avoid people connected to the event in order to preserve his shattered self-representation. The majority of P's relationships have suffered a breakdown due to changed</p> | <p>R offers mainly positive information about her family. She admires her mother for her ability to give but never to receive. And sees her father as a kind and loving man In addition, she</p> | <p>He construes the event as leading to a greater connection and meaningfulness in relationships. G values his relationships and sees them as healthy, incorporating both positive and negative aspects</p> | <p>E experiences discomfort in his relationship with his son. E is conscious of his son's anger and resentment toward him for failing to protect the family. His wife becomes an object used to</p> | <p>S is unable to trust anyone, as he does not want to place himself in a vulnerable position and be re-traumatised. S seems to be conscious of his mother's aggressive and abusive aspects. He sees his</p> | <p>C construes her boyfriend as comforting and caring. C sees her father as rejecting. C feel loved by her mother but feels slightly neglected. She attempts to justify her mother's lack of</p> |

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| | <p>representations. P cannot trust people as he sees them as insincere and threatening to his self-representation. He prefers to keep his distance rather than form close relationships with others for fear of them letting him down. P cannot trust others to be responsible but feels that he can only be trusted to be responsible, to the extent that he feels responsible for the lives of others</p> | <p>construes her relationship with her family as pleasant.</p> | <p>into his perception. He sees himself as loved, supported and cared for and sees others as valuable.</p> | <p>carry out his desire to reassert dominant self-representation. E seems to polarise his father and mother. He seems to view his father as bad and his mother as good. He seems to see his father and label with the same attributes as the attackers. He also experienced a breakdown in some relationships.</p> | <p>mother as all bad and has a deep hate for her as he sees her as intentionally harming him and holds her responsible for all the misery in his life. He seems to be largely conscious of the good aspects of his father. He experienced an isolation and inability to form meaningful relationships</p> | <p>attention for her. She feels that her mother loves her unconditionally but lacked the resources to care for her adequately.</p> |
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| <p>Forgiveness</p> | <p>P's experience of unforgiveness is one in which he holds onto deep hostility and anger and finds meaning or purpose in his desire for revenge. His perception of the perpetrators makes him incapable of relating to them. Therefore he lives his life fragmented, unable to integrate and accept his weaknesses or fragility. Consequently, his experience of his world in unforgiveness consists of ways to avoid the failed self-representation</p> | <p>Although R expresses and possibly believes that she has forgiven her perpetrators, she essentially experiences a form of pseudo forgiveness as a result of the way in which she has coped with the incident and its effects on her self-representation. R essentially experiences forgiveness as a forgetting, avoiding and a banishing of the perpetrator from her conscious mind. The offence in this case occurred on two levels. Firstly the physical</p> | <p>G's experiences forgiveness as an acceptance and integration of his vulnerable/fragile self-representation into his whole self. He is able to empathise and relate to the attackers as well as let go of fear, anger and hostility. G experienced forgiveness as a heightened consciousness of his own need for forgiveness. In addition G experienced a drawing nearer to significant others and an ability to relate to others more easily as well as a heightened sense of the</p> | <p>E's core experience of unforgiveness is one of feeling trapped and of being locked in the past and in his world. He experiences an inability to relate to the perpetrators and a holding onto deep aggression and anger. His inability to relate to his attackers stems from the way in which he sees them, as inherently evil and "all bad." He also attempts to forget and bury the 'assault' and the reality of the trauma. He experiences himself as disconnected and</p> | <p>The subject's experience of unforgiveness is one of holding onto anger and fear and living in a world that is constrained in terms of space and time. He also experiences an emotional and mental distancing and avoidance from the perpetrators. He construes the attackers as nameless, and faceless 'monsters.' Consequently, he experiences intense fear and paranoid anxiety. He experiences his world as a cage in which he trapped.</p> | <p>The subject's core experience of unforgiveness is a feeling of confusion and fragmentation, through blocking and distancing of the emotionally traumatic material. She attempts to distance herself from the attackers both physically and psychologically. Therefore, she experiences the attackers as a nameless, faceless entity, which continues to intimidate her. She construes the attackers as monsters and omnipotent beings and she becomes</p> |
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| | <p>and to attempt to rebuild his dominant heroic self-representation. His behaviour is aimed at eliminating any further threat to his self-representation, thereby being overly cautious, suspicious and attempting to be in complete control. Therefore his world or experience of unforgiveness consists of being isolated and avoidant.</p> | <p>assault of the perpetrator as well as the failure of herself to live up to and maintain her strong, self-sufficient and competent self-representation. In this way she is unable to relate to her perpetrator or to people who represent his race.</p> | <p>value and importance of relationships.</p> | <p>misunderstood by others.</p> | | <p>tormented by a stereotype or a generalised representation. The subject also is unable to accept the terror of her own sense of fragility and helplessness. In addition her attempt to screen out her emotions and block out the world leaves her feeling confused and fragmented.</p> |
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8.5 Appendix E: Example of an Entire Analysis

Table 3: Analysis Subject 4

| Step 2: Delineation of meaning units | Step 3: Re-articulation of meaning units from a psychological perspective |
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| <p>1. Um, the incident happened on the 28th of April, um, it was a month end pension pay day in the morning, which is when the shop catered for, um, the pension, the pension company to come and pay all the old grannies. It's a big payday for us, um, in the afternoon was B pay day. So it was, sort of, a double big day for us. Lots of cash to be had. Big business for us and um, we had a tremendous day. It really, really was a tremendous day...Had lots of old grannies that, um, needed help, lots of people needed help and it was just an excellent day. We finished off sort of timeously. We had a, we had a bakery in the shop, so when we closed up the shop, um, probably in the region of about six, half past six, we left the night duty staff baking in the locked up portion of the bakery and we went on upstairs.</p> | <p>E is largely conscious of the good and positive aspect of his world. He sees himself as helpful and strong and capable of helping others in need. He also sees himself as productive and effective in his environment.</p> |
| <p>2. While we were watching the news, um, the eight o'clock news, the night staff from the bakery buzzed us on the phone to say somebody was outside saying that they had a granny that needed attention, um, needed to get to hospital, she had been at, been earning pension all day. And she is stressed out, needed to get to the hospital and they had run out of petrol, so, um, we said, "okay, great". So we go down and I must have got hold of the keys round about 25 past, just after the sports on the news. Went downstairs, there was nobody in front of the shop, went into the shop, into the bakery section, there was nobody there, um, P wanted one or two things from the shop, opened the shop, went into the shop and switched off the alarm to go into the shop, so therefore the alarm was unarmed and the security company phoned up and said what's happening? And we gave them the necessary code, went into the shop, got hold of the stuff, came out of the shop, locked the shop, um,</p> | <p>E does not anticipate danger. E continues to see himself in the position of helper. E sees others as trustworthy.</p> |

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| <p>sorted a few things out in the bakery.</p> <p>3. And then, um, I got out of the door and I locked the door, but hadn't had time to put the security company, the security, um, alarm on, and with that there was, um, I heard the gun being cocked behind me. A couple of chaps ran me down, there must have been about seven or nine, most of them were armed. So there were seven to nine, um, armed chaps that were behind me. They beat me quite hard right from the word go. Not as in the first hold-up, um, where they keep their distance. This time they really were right on top of me, they beat me... I've been through three hold-ups. This is the second one. And, um, and, um, they wanted me to unlock the, um, to get into the shop and, um, "Where the keys, where the keys?". And I gave them the keys and he says "Unlock the shop." I said, "You got the keys." And they were immediately aggressive on the whole lot, anyway, they gave me the keys, I unlocked the door and as I opened the door, um, they pushed me through the door, grabbed the four chaps that were baking, ran them through the bakery, to the ablution block on the other side, locked all four in the same loo, bolted it and then wanted to get into the shop, which took another key.</p> | <p>E was attacked by several armed men who beat him severely. He is conscious of their extreme aggression and does as they command without resisting. He sees the attackers as aggressive and dangerous. And he sees himself as vulnerable, violated and powerless as well as mistreated and abused by the perpetrators.</p> |
| <p>4. They beat me again, um, took me, I opened the door for them, they recovered the keys from me, then rushed through into the shop. There was a continuous, um, question and answer, which I only picked up later on. Um, like, "Where's the safe?" and you know, at that stage, you not interested in trying to save a couple of bucks. It was a lot of money, but that's all it boiled down to...And, um, and I led them to where the safe was what I didn't realise was that there was someone who was answering, saying, "The safe is through the blue door to the right." And "Where's this?" and somebody would answer. And anyway, and once they got into the safe, I got cracked on the head again for not opening the safe, or for the safe not being open. Um, I don't like</p> | <p>E is conscious of the brutal, irrational and aggressive manner of the perpetrators as well as their cunning communication. He sees himself as abused by the perpetrators as well as helpless.</p> |

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| firearms. | |
| <p>5. My firearm was in the safe, so as we opened up the safe, they took my firearm out, um, they took money, they lay me down on the ground and I just remember praying, saying to God, "If it's my time, I'm ready to go. But, you gonna have to look after P and the kids." And as sore and bleeding as I was, I was quite at peace with that.</p> | <p>E feels completely powerless against the perpetrators. He surrenders to their demands without resistance. He sees himself as hurt, wounded and fragile as well as needed by his family, which he feels unable to protect. He anticipates death at which point he becomes conscious of God and his family. He begins to pray. E construes God as in control and powerful as well as protecting and caring. E experiences a sense of peace about death.</p> |
| <p>6. Um, they wanted to know what I was looking, what I was looking at when I WAS, tried to look up to see what was going on. Um, I didn't really recognise anybody at that stage. They, as they walked in, they destroyed all the phones, bar the fax machine. They didn't recognise the fax machine. And, so now, by now, we running a little too late for me to be down in the shop and getting upstairs to my family. My family's now concerned about, um, why are, why I'm not getting back. They tried to buzz me on the phone. Which with the phones destroyed they couldn't do. And the fax machine didn't give us the buzz signal. And anyway, they took out chickens, watches, radios, cosmetics. They wanted car keys. My pickup was in the driveway. So that's the first thing they did. They took the pickup and they loaded it full, they must have really loaded it full. Even though we had had a very successful day, um, there were still lots of radios, watches, chickens, meat, that type of thing.</p> | <p>E construes the perpetrator's actions as unnecessary, destructive and greedy. E experiences himself as helpless, immobile and robbed of his autonomy. He sees himself as loved and cared for by his family.</p> |
| <p>7. They really emptied the freezer. And then...the one chap said, um, where's, um, in Zulu, I speak Zulu well, and he said, "Where's the woman?" and I said to them, um, obviously I kept quiet and the voice I recognised then, it was then that I recognised that there had been somebody that had been supplying answers all the time and they said, um, "They upstairs." So obviously the main hold-up group didn't, were unaware of the whole situation and they were relying on inside information there and, um, so they grabbed hold of me and frog marched me</p> | <p>E continues to construe the attackers as cunning, inhuman and aggressive. E feels betrayed and violated.</p> |

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| <p>out, through the bakery, um, we switched off the bakery mixer, but everything else was chaotic there. The boys were still locked up in the, in the loo. And they marched me in front of the, in front of the shop, up the stairs and onto the veranda. Now we have a characteristic knock, which I will knock, um, like you knocked tonight. If I had not been here tonight, they would have had a look to see who's at the door. Except that I had been away for so long, they were expecting me up...</p> | |
| <p>8. ...that they, um, opened the door and the first thing they, they dropped P to the floor, released her of all her jewellery. Her wedding ring, engagement ring, I mean, they knew EXACTLY what they were doing. Um, my kids weren't with us at the time, um, they were down the passage. S came up from the passage. They ran up to meet S, they gave him a hard crack and marched him into his room, his room was the first on the right. My son S, ja, the one that's just driven out and then, um, and then we went to and then they marched us into our bedroom, second on the, um, left. And they took P and they walked her round to the dressing table, where, and they sat S and me on the bed, so, P went behind us, where the dressing table...and they went into the dressing table, like they knew exactly where P kept all her jewellery and things like that. And we don't, we didn't have massive amounts of jewellery, but, it was precious what we did have, um, the spare ring and inherited rings and things like that. They knew EXACTLY where to look. Even though to me, they seemed to be in totally unfamiliar places.</p> | <p>E sees the perpetrators as having complete control in that they were abusing and taking what they wanted from E's wife and children. E was helpless in the face of his family's trauma. E sees his family as completely helpless and defenceless. E continues to see the perpetrators as sly and calculating.</p> |
| <p>9. And then, one of the chaps started, um, molesting P and P said, "NO, that's..." and I turned around and saw what was going on and he was molesting her and I said, "THAT IS not necessary."</p> | <p>E felt helpless as one of the perpetrators began to sexually abuse his wife. This is the first time he resists verbally.</p> |
| <p>10. They had got excited about finding my fishing box 'cause it looked like a safe. A big metal fishing box, they had got excited</p> | <p>E construes a miracle to take place and God to intervene as he should have been shot but was unharmed. He sees himself as loved and</p> |

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| <p>about a metal air gun, cap gun that S had because they had presumed that was a gun. They HAD my gun. On the way down the passage, um, before they marched us into the room, um, think they felt they had got to the end of me being, needed to be around and they actually shot. And I felt the puff of air against the back of my head and um, hole in the roof and um, for a person to shoot, they going to be shooting like that and for the puff to be felt there, you know, if they going to be going through the air, its just not possible. I believe God, that's the first time God REALLY intervened in the whole situation.</p> | <p>protected by God. He sees God as powerful, protecting and intervening. He continues to construe the perpetrators as lethal and dangerous.</p> |
| <p>11. Then when they started messing P around, I said that was not necessary and they cracked me a VERY hard shot. S and I were seated on the bed. They had taken our jewellery and they had take...they took P out into the passage and walked her down into the last door on the right hand side, which was the bathroom. Inside the bathroom were J, M and L. L is a friend of theirs. And they were all in the bath. Now we looking at eight, nine, ten year olds sitting in there and they just, um, they, they in the bath. They, um, they marched P in there, they took P's pants off immediately, um, and they were getting ready to rape P. They took J out the bath, stood her next to her and, um, when P was, walked out the room, marched out the room, whatever, she just said, 'E, no, E, please.' And for the, it MEANS something to us, because P's always had a nightmare from the first days I met P, about being raped. About a black man standing over her in bed, in the bedroom and she'd wake up screaming at night. And it was very, very...it was one of the things that P did, I mean, when she slept at peoples places, we sort of, not only jokingly, but forewarned them that, "Just watch P and her nightmare. Just don't get, you know, careful!" so, anyway, they took P in, took her jeans off, took her pants off, a man got over and straddled P to rape her.</p> | <p>The perpetrators assaulted E violently for resisting and intended raping P. P pleaded with E to help. E felt completely helpless and deeply hurt, as he knew the extent of his wife's fear. E sees the perpetrators as cruel and inhuman as they harm unnecessarily. He construes his wife as helpless and vulnerable and in need of his protection and help. He feels completely powerless and helpless in the situation.</p> |
| <p>12. Now, as they marched P out, S and I, I said, "S, pray." And we had just been doing the</p> | <p>E and his son began chanting a prayer loudly in resistance to P's rape. The perpetrators</p> |

bible study course at M and we had just done the Father God, the fatherhood of God and the power in the name of Jesus. And so the first thing that came to mind was, um, we yelled, like we were yelling for rugby. "IN JESUS' NAME PROTECT P, IN JESUS' NAME PROTECT P." And I was chanting with my fists, "In Jesus' name protect P." And, um, he said to me, he took my gun, he had my gun, he says, "If you don't stop I'm going to shoot you." I said, "If you shoot me, you've got Jesus to contend with. IN JESUS' NAME PROTECT . In Jesus' name..." and really we were chanting, we were chanting loudly, I mean anybody in the whole of B should have heard that. And then he tried to hit me with my pistol. Instead of shooting me, he tried to hit me with my pistol. Now, I don't know whether it's the same chap who tried to shoot me in the passage, maybe he realised this pistol just doesn't do it. So, he tried to hit me. And I remember seeing his arm taking a full swing from behind him, a full sort of 180 degrees to hit me on the top of my head, to knock me right out. And it couldn't get to me. Um, S and I were sitting there and it was like we were sitting in, um, a dome, a, an igloo, a glass igloo and it was totally around us. And the chap got close. I mean, you know, he got right there. I didn't feel a thing, its not as though I couldn't feel it...he didn't hit me. I mean, he was taking a full swing with this thing and going to crack me on the head and it didn't get to me. And, "IN JESUS' NAME PROTECT P." "STOP THAT SHOUTING." And finally, in Zulu, he said to his, um, accomplice, mate, whatever it is. He says, um, in Zulu, (words spoken in Zulu), "I don't know what's going on here, but this is more than I can handle. "Go and tell them..." "Oh," they said, "Stop." I said, "If you want me to stop, get that man off my woman." And he said to the chaps, he said, "Eh, I don't know what's going on, go and get that chap, to stop." Okay. They knew, obviously that there was a rape or a potential rape going on. "Just go and tell that man to

attempted to assault E but were prevented from doing so. E construes this as an act of God. In addition the men were unable to rape P because they became impotent. E also sees this as Gods intervention. E felt protected and safe and powerful. The perpetrators became uneasy and stopped. E continues to see God as powerful and protecting as well as all good. He sees himself as protected and safe through God as well as being effectual in the situation through God. E changes from referring to P as "P" to "my woman."

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| <p>stop.” And, um, he went through and he came back and said, “Wenzagile.” It is done. In other words, they’ve stopped.</p> | |
| <p>13. Um, he was able to put his hand through this like glass veneer and grab me on the shoulders, okay, and he pulled, stood up and marched us through to the bathroom. Now, in the time that we were shouting “IN JESUS’ NAME PROTECT.” The man stripped P, um, got P on the ground, spread her legs. Got...tried to get on her and was impotent. Wasn’t able to physically commit the rape. And he just went, whatever. Um, in frustration he got up. Now bare in mind, I got J, the eldest next to her, I got the other two girls still in the bath. They all naked. We’ve now got four naked women in there, two chaps bent on doing rape or a couple of chaps bent on doing rape and they’ve kicked P. And they’ve KICKED. Now they’ve had P home, they’ve taken her pants off, they’ve got her legs spread and now they kicking P and P just says, well, you know, her thought was, you know, “You’ve got me at this place, why kick me on top of it.” And, um, they marched us in, they lay us on, J, myself and P, on the Marley tile in the bathroom.</p> | <p>The perpetrators kicked P and lay the family on the floor. E construes the attackers as malicious and brutal. He sees his wife as humiliated and violated and himself as powerless to protect her. He feels helpless to meet his wife’s needs.</p> |
| <p>14. “DON’T MOVE, DON’T MOVE, DON’T MOVE.” Waving the guns around. “WHERE THE KEYS, WHERE THE KEYS?” I said, “You’ve already got the keys for the Pickup.” Um, we had a car, but it was a dark car and in the, in the shadow of the building behind and they hadn’t seen it, so there’s no point in giving them keys to that as well. And, we just, um, and they sort of walked up the passage, “DON’T MOVE, ELSE I’LL KILL YOU. WHERE’S THE KEYS FOR THE HOUSE?” And they were going to kill us because they couldn’t get the keys to lock us in the bathroom. And J then prayed and said, “God, if they shoot one of us, let them shoot ALL of us so we all go to heaven together.” And, that was it. They marched out the passage, then one of them came rushing back, “DON’T MOVE,</p> | <p>The perpetrators threatened their lives and fled. E sees the perpetrators as irrational and capable of killing them. E became intensely fearful once they had left as he was unsure of their location and feared their return.</p> |

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| <p>I'LL KILL YOU. I'M GOING TO KILL YOU." It was very close, he was hysterical. Very, very close, and um, they walked out...and it was gone. They absolutely gone and all of a sudden, it was all over. But probably the time I was most scared, was then. Because, are they out? Are they in?</p> | |
| <p>15. We heard the last of the scuffle, we heard a vehicle drive off, we heard another vehicle drive off. Now you got to see if there's anything. There's nothing down the passage. Now, look in your room and it's, you know, a LONG passage, you know, it's like a corridor it's so long. And you look down into each of the rooms and you realise, as you go through, that all your fancy stuff, your anything electronic and electrical is gone. Your TV, your M-Net, your decoders, the mixer, the kettle, the microwave, the, you name it. Anything that was, um, electronic and carryable, is gone and you walked out and there was NOTHING. Now we got to get through the house, outside the front door and to have a look there was nobody on the veranda and the stairs. And that was probably the scarest I've ever been in my life. Now to walk down those stairs, um, my pickup I can see is gone. And I can see that there's no other vehicle around there. And to walk in there and go into the shop. Now is there somebody still in the shop? So, you don't know whether you should bolt the door or unbolt the door, but anyway, I DID bolt the door. And I went and touched the door of the loo. And it was like switching on electricity on all, all those little four baking boys there. They were TERRIFIED. I opened that door up, I went through and I tried to get phones. Now they had taken all our phones upstairs, phones downstairs and I just, there was nothing I could possibly do. There was ABSOLUTELY no ways I could do anything. Um, we had the Cressida at the back, which I could get in and go. Um, I went upstairs to reassure the family that everything was safe, everything was gone. They were behind locked</p> | <p>E experienced intense fear. He was stripped of both his autonomy and his valuable possessions. He feels completely powerless and incapacitated. E experiences the perpetrators as more terrifying when he can no longer see them as they are "monstrous" or inhuman in his mind. E begins to attend to the needs of the others after the event in order to reassert his strong, effective and helpful self-representation.</p> |

doors, um, and fed the boys some, lots of sugar to try and get them to get over their shock and try and get all the chaos in the bakery, I mean, you've got dough that's now been, um, proving, a 20 minute prove of dough, now gone for an hour. You can imagine, there's a 120 loaves of bread, just sort of oozing out the tins and drying. Going across the floor and things like that. And then I remembered that, the cell phone, not cell phone, the, the fax machine hadn't been done, so I went and picked it up and its line hadn't been destroyed.

16. So, I picked up and I dialled the T cops and um, told them that we'd just been through a hold-up. Then we dialled J to tell her that we'd been held-up and that L was okay, but we had been through a hold-up. And we waited some time, then we dialled, um, 10111, for flying squad, got through to H. H said phone T, I said, "It's the third time I'd be phoning T. Now, they still not here, can you chaps give us a hand?" and I said, they asked if we were in immediate danger, I said "the chaps here have left, but obviously, there's been a major hold-up and we need and, um", the flying squad left H and got to us, J was the first to arrive from P, got to us at B before the cops from T got here, which is only 5 k's away. And then, um, the flying squad got to us next and then the T cops arrived pickled, absolutely pickled. While we were there, a lady up the road phoned the T police to say somebody had driven past and left a TV and a, a...A cassette player, um, in her driveway. Now bare in mind, this all happened between, let's say, half past eight and nine o'clock. And we, um, and the cops said, "Fine, we'll attend to it." The cops dealt with us down there, they came back, they drove past the TV at about 11. Half past 11, she phoned them again to say the TV's still there, but the, um, the recorder had been taken. Then at about half past, um, 12, she phoned again and said the TV's there and somebody's coming to take it. And the cops immediately sent somebody out and they collected TV.

E construes the police as incompetent and neglectful as well as uncaring and uninterested. He feels devalued, unimportant and neglected by the police. He sees his friend J as very helpful.

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| <p>Unfortunately they put their hands all over the show, held it against their bodies and brought it in here. There's no fingerprints and that was it. They, we identified the TV as ours. Obviously had been used, in my opinion, as payment for information or whatever. It was going to somebody else. And that was, that was our hold-up.</p> | |
| <p>17. Our church was very quick to arrive. We phoned one or two people. Um, R and A P came out, they spent the night with us. And my family, they arrived from H and from the coast. Both sitting at 200 k's away. Um, and those that could spend the night, spent the night with us.</p> | <p>E construes some of his church friends and family as caring and concerned. He sees himself as loved and cared for by his church and family.</p> |
| <p>18. My mom spent the next MONTH with us.</p> | |
| <p>19. Um, P was very traumatised through the whole show. We saw a doctor the following day to ascertain to the extent of the rape, um, to confirm that, well, she certainly hadn't been violated as far as, um, THAT rape was concerned. But, from the mental point of view, she'd been exceedingly badly treated. When they had hit her in the bedroom, they'd, um, when they were starting to molest her, and she res...uh, resisted, they hit her on the side of the ear and popped her eardrum. And, um, ja, it was rough, it was very rough.</p> | <p>E sees his wife as being severely physically as well as emotionally traumatised. E continues to construe the perpetrators as rough and malicious.</p> |
| <p>20. And your other question was how did we cope with it. Well, I remember sitting at about three o'clock in the morning and A P saying to me, "E, you look ghastly." And now, I mean EVERYBODY'S looking ghastly, I mean, we all look ghastly at that time in the morning. But I had all the blood, still from, on me, from all the beating, so A got me down and we had, um, washed all the blood off. Now that things are starting to settle down, um, kids are starting to settle. Um, um, people have arrived, they've had tea, they've had coffee, tea and coffee's being made a 100 percent of the time. As I say, the following day we saw the doctor, um, just to ascertain P. P went back and P went into, um, climbed into, and she doesn't remember much for the next month. She actually believes that the following day she was back in the</p> | <p>E sees his close friends as caring and helpful. And he feels cared for and supported by his friends. E sees himself as continuing with life as normal. He attempts to re-establish a sense of control and a helpful and effective self-representation by continuing to work.</p> |

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| <p>shop. It took her a month before she put her foot in the shop again. P got a complete blank of a month. That following day I woke up at seven o'clock and we rushed around and between, the change in everybody's pocket was 36 rand. And that was how we started the float for the following day. And a couple of hours later, we paid everybody back their 36 rand for the float to run the shop.</p> | |
| <p>21. They had taken, um, the burglary cost us about 136 thousand rand in money, stuff taken and a pickup. And, um, insurance paid out something like 36 thousand, I think, in total of the whole lot. So it was a major loss to us and, um, as far as I was concerned, um, there was a business that needed to be run, the banks, we needed to have banked that money. They transferred money from a private source of ours into the account, which made me very mad, made it very short, made the finances difficult for a period of time, um, obviously with that amount of money out the system, um, we had to be careful with our accounts. And there were people who needed it, it was month end, that volume amount out. There were people due to be paid with those, with that type of money and they were just obviously not paid, because there was just no money lying around. And, um, it was tough, it was really, really a tough period and there was too much work to be, needed to be done to bother about trying to work out whether I am coping or not going to cope.</p> | <p>E attempts to reclaim a sense of control by keeping busy. He seems to construe an emotional reaction as unnecessary in the situation. He possibly sees emotion as a further indication of weakness, which may further erode his damaged sense of self and control. E feels he has let go of so much and so much has been taken away from him that he contains his emotions as an attempt to hold onto something.</p> |
| <p>22 And to my way of, um, it's the way I am, you know, if my backs against the wall, I'm not gonna sit down and mope about it. I would rather get down and do the best that I can do, which is precisely what I did. I did and, um, people would say, "How're you?" "I'M FINE, I'M TOPS." Because what else can you say? "Oh, I'm moping or I'm down or, um, I'm still feeling the aftermath of a bullet shaving my head" and things like that. It's irrelevant, it's happened, it's in the past. Put it behind you,</p> | <p>E construes expression of emotion and despair as a sign of weakness. E sees the sharing of his emotions honestly as irrelevant and unnecessary. E attempted to avoid and deny the emotion associated with the trauma by keeping busy in order to cope. This may be an attempt to reclaim his self-representation of strength and being needed.</p> |

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| <p>get on and, um, that's how I coped. It made me realise that, regardless of what, what life throws at you, and you've got two choices at the end of the day, as to whether you're going to sit down and count your woes, or else...</p> <p>[Disturbance]</p> | |
| <p>23. Um, life is, um, life's got to carry on. After the hold up, we, um, we had to, we had a choice of whether we could curl up and die or whether we going actually, um, pick up the pieces and go, okay, and with everything that had happened we just didn't, well, I certainly didn't have the time to, um, roll over and play 'woe me'. And I just had to get up and get going and for that reason we had to get as much, um, float as possible from all the friends.</p> | <p>E construes one's ability to cope as a choice. E seems to look down upon the expression of despair. E attempts to reassert his masculine tough self-representation by being emotionally strong.</p> |
| <p>24. Um, of, I think we got 38 rand to run the float the following day and we had to just get up and get going. There was nothing more to do about it. As I say, we just had to get, um, we had to get up and get going. And there was very little time for, um, self pity, self-sorrow or anything like that. P needed to go to the doctor which we dealt with the following day, um, we had a crisis financially, which we had to deal with, the bank to help us deal with the sentimental side of things, there, were, were there was just, there was just NO room for, um, there was just no room to sort of try and get on and recover. And we really just had to get up and get going. P was, would you...had the LUXURY of being able to be out of commission for as long as she was, a month. Um, although she's unaware of it, but she was,</p> | <p>E continues to see emotional expression as a form of self-indulgence or self-pity. He sees himself as strong by being emotionally contained and independent.</p> |

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| <p>she was, um, completely she's missed a month of her life there. The kids got on with their life and um, they carried on doing what they had to do.</p> | |
| <p>25. And how's it impacted my life? Well, I've never been one to dwell in self pity and have therefore, once we got over it, it was, um, and once we started healing physically...we had life to continue and there were miles too many other stresses and strains, um, that were occupying ourselves tight there and then...that allowed us to dwell on what had happened.</p> | <p>E sees himself as positive, self-sufficient and strong. He also sees the world and his life as stressful, unhelpful and unrelenting.</p> |
| <p>26. We couldn't afford to fall apart. There was no time to fall apart and um, however, it did NOT make us fearless to close the shop late. It was really going into, um, April, May, June, being the darkest month of the, um, year. From a time point of view, so if you close the shop at six that's already dark. Um, you closing the shop, you closing the shop, um, you on the wrong side of the steel door...you've got, the whole yard's available to you. If anybody wants to hide and come at you at that stage, once the doors locked, you know, you very vulnerable. So, you feel vulnerable, but, um, no, as far as, did I fall apart? Did I have any nightmares? Did I have any fears or anything like that? No.</p> | <p>E admits exercising caution in security of the shop in order to prevent being re-traumatised. However, he struggles with the notion of fear, which may be a representation of weakness to him. He begins to see others as threatening and the world as unpredictable. He struggles to come to terms with his sense of vulnerability.</p> |
| <p>27. Yes. Very, very much cautious. We try to make a rule that we're gonna close the shop, ON TIME. In fact, maybe in fact, half an hour earlier, so we close during daylight hours. We've also made a habit of NOT staying in the shop until the last customer had gone. In other words, um, we close the shop and got out the shop while the last of the customers were still drinking the last of their, um, beer on the veranda or whatever. Socialising or whatever they were doing, so that you left in a crowd Um, you know, just small little things like that and we also made, um, a golden rule, which</p> | <p>E and his family incorporated safety measures into their everyday routines in order to guard against a further attack.</p> |

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| <p>took a long time to break, was that once you had locked the shop, you didn't go back down to the shop. Regardless of reason. And, um, bare in mind we still had a bakery that was running and it still needed, um, attention and yes, when we did have break downs or for some unknown reason they'd forgotten a particular ingredient or an order, or if we HAD to go down to the bakery, we still HAD to but it was out of ABSOLUTE necessity. It wasn't just anything we, um, did just because somebody wants a litre of coca cola or something from the shop.</p> | |
| <p>28. Um, a lot of people asked us about it. We gave a lot of testimony to it. Um, as you know, Joy magazine came out and spoke to us about it. Our, we gave testimony to our church. We gave testimony to various groups, um, everybody wanted to hear the story. It was a good story, um, and especially with, um, God being so strong, featuring so...strongly. Um, there was good reason to, we were very active in our church. So it was, it was a PRIME example to, um, to tell other people about it. Even though they got their own belief or ...whatever. It was, it was good and I suppose if we told the story once, we must of told it a 100 times. Um, people, out of curiosity, people that wanted to know, people that, um, wanted to try and identify.</p> | <p>E construes the event as having a positive element in that it demonstrated how God helped his family and enabled him to identify and relate to others who had been through similar trauma. He sees others as interested and curious about his ordeal rather than concerned.</p> |
| <p>29. Some of the comments that were made once they heard it, how they would have reacted, were absolutely ridiculous. From...oh, you won't believe some answers that some people said that they would've said under the circumstances. Ja, um, that I'm not insured, therefore you can't take it or um, that, um, we were held up and so much was taken from us because we didn't tithe enough. Um, oh, you won't believe it, there were, if I really have to stretch my memory, we'll go back to some very hairy answers. <i>(How did you feel when they, when they said things like that?)</i></p> | <p>E expresses disappointment from some of the reactions of his fellow Christians, which he construes as accusing and unfounded. He sees and labels some Christian people as uncaring, judgmental and insensitive. He sees himself as disconnected and misunderstood by others.</p> |

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| <p>Laughed at them. No, no. when you get behind... When you standing behind a nine millimetre gun and the chaps says I want to take everything and you trying to work out, ‘ “Well, have I tithed?” and...</p> | |
| <p>30. The irony behind it is absolutely foolish and there were some beautiful Christian clichés, which are, just prove that there are Christians that are completely frivolous, as far as, um, the absolutely belief as to where God IS and was and what He did for us. You know, he was there. And we came out of it alive. And if we had died, we would have trusted it to God’s will and we would have trusted Him to have looked after P as I said earlier on. And um, ja, people said that by telling the story so many times, we were able to deal with it a lot easier than...than what, um, if we’d not been able to talk about it and as I say, a lot of people wanted to know.</p> | <p>E construes God as powerful, protecting and trustworthy. He expresses annoyance at others disbelief of God’s intervention. He tends to see others as completely good or bad. He sees some people as completely frivolous and experiences resentment toward them. He sees them as blaming, judging and ignorant. E construes God as continuing to care for them by allowing them to talk about the event many times to facilitate their coping.</p> |
| <p>31. I don’t know why we had to go through that hold up, um, I never blamed God for going through the hold-up, I praise God for being able to come through the hold-up, um, my son’s still mad at it, I realised, um, probably in our first interview, that he has not ever really got over the hold-up. Um, for me talking to you about it again, is just an opportunity to tell the story one more time, um, I give glory to God that we are standing here. I’ve been through much up until then and a lot subsequently.</p> | <p>E sees God as responsible for saving his family and uses opportunities to talk about the event as a chance to praise God. E cannot understand the purpose of the event in his life. He sees himself as dependent on God for safety and protection.</p> |
| <p>32. Um, S has not, was almost cross, that I had agreed to the interview. He says it’s happened, it’s past, it’s behind us, leave it, don’t dig it up again. Um, I don’t feel that way about it. I don’t have a problem with it. Um, no, he hadn’t been exposed to it, um, he was also beaten. He was a little boy, 10 years old, or whatever, um, I suppose it’s a terrifying thing when you see your father totally incapacitated. And although he sat next to the bed when we were chanting and saying “In Jesus’ name</p> | <p>E construes himself as coping better than others by being emotionally contained and apparently unaffected. He admits that he felt completely incapacitated during the ordeal.</p> |

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| <p>protect P”, and he saw the man try to hit me and he saw the man what he interpreted as he, he’s the one who interpreted it as a Zulu war dance. But it’s a part of his life he wants to get well behind him and not bring it up again.</p> | |
| <p>33. Um, you know, people said to us that we’ve been through the hold-ups, we’ve been through the hi-jacks, so we would be equipped to council people under the various circumstances. So when somebody says to you, says well, and you can go to someone who’s been through and we were, we were confronted with, um, T, um, and his wife, they were, almost identical situation and when you go to them and say, “I’m sorry, I’m very sorry, I know what you’ve gone through and you’ve SEEN it”. People say, “look, I know what you’re going through”. “How DO you know?” “I’ve been there, I’ve bought the T-shirt.” Um, and so from that circumstance, it’s a very expensive way to be able to say, I’ve been there. You know, I DO know what I’m talking about. Um, EVERYTHING that we went through, there’s got to be a purpose for it. Was it to condition us? Was it to refine us? Was it to make us trust in God? Did we NOT trust in God? Um, I have no idea, I can’t answer that question, was there any meaning for it. It happened, we survived, by God’s grace, we still here to tell the story. Ja, it’s often ‘cause just many people try to explain why things happen, ‘cause it seems like an unnecessary event. But, often people to, in a way, to cope, they’ll, they’ll and think, you know, why... Try and justify. You know, there’s a bumper sticker that reads, it says, ‘Life Happens’. It happens. We had a trading store, with, an, a lot of money on appropriate days. There were three road exits to it, um, we were vulnerable, the political crime situation in the country was very much ripe, they were looking for soft targets, and...</p> | <p>E struggles with contemplating the meaning of the event although he sees the event as having some wider purpose in life but he does not know what it is, although he sees God as in control of that purpose. He also contemplates circumstantial reasons for the crime. He construes life as being purposeful and events as having meaning although he cannot understand.</p> |
| <p>34. ...we were a soft target, so, you know, people said, um, you have a choice as to</p> | <p>E construes life and events as a consequence of choices. In this way he seems to be holding</p> |

whether you do or don't want to be held up. Get out of the situation, which probably was the first time I'd ever really thought of it. If you don't want to be held up... then get out. Don't be a soft target. How do you not, get rid of the shop, at any cost and, um, when we went for counselling, it's probably the only thing that stuck in my crawl. The person, um, you've got a choice and I said, how can you possibly say that? But if you don't want to be held up again, you get rid of the shop. I said, well we can't sell it. He says well, that's your choice. You can't sell it at the price you want it or else you don't want to sell it or you don't want to get out of the hold-up. In other words, is the hold-up worse, WORTH, um, the asking price of the business? Or is it worth 100 000 less for you. Would you go through, they actually said to me, "Would you go through that hold up for another 100 000 rand?" Well, it just made me realise that under ALL circumstances, we always have choices, sometimes there's a price to pay, so if we held our for the FULL price of the shop, which we tried to, we landed up with another hold-up, just under a year later. Um, so it was my choice to hold out for a better price. And I was subjected to another hold-up. Not as vicious, but I was. Whereas, if I had accepted and the figure of 100 000 happened, was because there was somebody in the offering for 100 000 Rand less than what we were asking, um, so or 100 000 Rand less, we could have avoided the second hold-up. It's a logical way of looking at it. But, one does have choices in life.

Well, lets put it this way. If you were to drive a Hi-Ace, Toyota Hi-Ace. The chances of you being hi-jacked are what you say, 10 times, 20 times, 100 times more than driving your little Corsa. Okay, friends of ours had just had, while the wife and the kids were sitting in their kombi, in U, having their friend's vehicle fixed up at Isu...U Isuzu, three chaps came and demanded them to get out their kombi and they wanted to hi-jack them.

himself responsible for the attack. This may also be an attempt to reclaim a sense of control over his life and self-representation. E continues to construe circumstances as a result of one's choices.

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| <p>And, um, so if you drive the right vehicle, you're much more vulnerable than if you driving a little Corsa Lite.</p> | |
| <p>35. No, no. We had NO control under the situation other than go with the flow. Um, and we could have opposed it at any stage. I said to you last time, I'm sure I did, that if I ever was held up again, there's no ways I would take it passively, um, primarily, my belief now is that the people who hold up are normally, although a bunch of thugs, they also a bunch of cowards. And your reaction, if it is volatile and aggressive, will probably be so out of character, that they would probably, um, abort their attempt at holding up or whatever it is. Probably before you get shot. Um, I wasn't given that opportunity again, so I can't prove it right or wrong.</p> | <p>E sees the perpetrators as completely stripping him of his control and autonomy. E sees the perpetrators as completely bad as thugs and cowards. He attempts to reassert his masculine, strong self-representation by resolving to fight back aggressively. He possibly experiences guilt through a sense of failure for not having lived up to his strong, controlled, helpful self-representation.</p> |
| <p>36. But I do know that the reason why I would be NOT able to just go with the flow again, um, not that I would be suicidal, would be because I wouldn't want to subject my family to the, supposedly going with the flow stage, where they're gonna be, um, get their, in other words...if they're going to get to my family, it's going to be over my dead body. Yes, while it is your money and your possessions, and your grocery stock and whatever it is, it's easy thing to make a decision, ja, you welcome to it, but once it becomes your kin, it, um, completely different ball game. It adds a different aspect to the equation.</p> | <p>E construes his new lack of passivity as protection for his family. E seems to have unresolved guilt over his lack of resistance and failed self-representation of strength and power.</p> |
| <p>37. I think a person, I think they're thugs and cowards. I cannot think of them as anything else but that. They're manipulative people who will use, um, a threatening thing such as a gun, firearm, knife, whatever it is. Whatever it is and they still beat you on top of it. You know, um, it's not enough just to have a gun trained on somebody, to know that it's all going to work out, they've got to impose their brutality. Their, their strength, their dominance over the</p> | <p>E sees the attackers as completely bad and is unable to see them as anything else. He sees them as acting out of malicious intent rather than out of need or circumstance. He sees them an inhuman unable to care and purely evil.</p> |

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| <p>situation, by, um, you know, making sure that there's a bit of bloodshed, odd tooth rattled, um, um, my eye very, very badly affected.</p> <p>Um, when they had P on the floor, um, I mean, there were a number of people there, they had, they all had guns, they were trained, they had her pants off, yet they still insisted on beating her and kicking her. Um, it doesn't make much sense. It really, really, I mean, they've got total control over the situation, its mere brutality, thugary, um...because, um, I think it's just, it's, it's just wanting to dominate the situation totally. And with no feelings or care for anybody else. Um, I'm not saying that if somebody came and held you up and they didn't beat you up, that they care, anymore or any less for you. Then, for what, for why?</p> | |
| <p>38. Is it for the sheer pleasure of it? When they've taken every bit money and stuff out the shop and then they've gone up to your house and they've cleaned out all the saleable TV, decoders, um, Kenwood mixers, microwave ovens, kettles, toasters, all that's been taken from you, why the rape?</p> | <p>E has deep anger and hatred toward the perpetrators. He construes the perpetrators as inherently evil as they take pleasure in others pain. He struggles to understand and relate to the perpetrators.</p> |
| <p>39. You know, is it, you know, why the rape? Is it, just, your, you want to express your dominance over, um, somebody, you really want that power, um...There's no need, you know, a kid that walks into the shop and goes to the end and he's busy eyeing you and he goes along to the polony and he slips himself a two rand fifty sausage of polony and he goes along to the other side and he might try and whip a half loaf of bread which he's probably going to pay for and try and sneak out the polony, that chaps doing it out of hunger.</p> <p>He's got no malicious, he's just very, very hungry. Now, if he goes along to the watch cabinet, um, as the one did and takes a couple of watches and fills his shoes up with watch batteries, that's a completely different kettle of fish. He's, there's no necessity. That's just absolute greed and it leads to what we've been</p> | <p>E continues to see the perpetrators as completely evil and not a victim of circumstance but abusing their power. In addition he sees their motive as sinister. He sees the perpetrators as acting out of inherent evil rather than out of external need or circumstances.</p> |

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| <p>through, through the thugary and things like that. Um, and we caught all sorts of shop lifters, and you know, when one of those little hungry, hungry little chaps came through and they've pinched the polony, yes, they will get a hiding and they, we did, um, we gave them good hidings, because there were MANY of them, would come and say, "I'm, Numbile, I'm hungry". And you would sympathise with them. A mug of tea and a quarter loaf of bread and probably a slice of polony on top of that. So there was no reason to it, not in our shop. That's probably the one aspect of ours that we actually, um, why we were taken so unawares, was because of the hold up, we were, um, they asked us to get there, to help them.</p> | |
| <p>40. Because there were grannies that needed to get to hospital, because they were sick and we were that type of people. I mean, we've delivered babies in our shop, we've carried them to hospital, we've put them in our own vehicles at night to take them through to hospital, so, we had. And that particular day, we had done more than gone the extra mile, with an old granny that was, um, probably dying of a heart attack. And it might have been, these chaps might have seen that, ah, remember that granny, lets use her as an excuse. We know how gullible these people are to, um, want to help, so you know, the brutality on top of the fact that they used our, um, what would you call it, our, our WANT to help them, to get into, to get to us.</p> | <p>E sees the perpetrators as completely opposite to himself and is unable to relate to them. He construes himself as the hero wanting to help and the perpetrators as evil, wanting to harm.</p> |
| <p>41. Like I said to you the other day is that, um, if I saw, if I was able to identify any of them and I don't know that I could identify them. And they were still involved in what they did to us, um, under whatever circumstances. I would find it very difficult to not want to stretch their necks, kill them. And be extremely, um, aggressive, in the situation, however, if for any reason that they came to</p> | <p>At present E has extreme anger and hatred for the attackers and expresses a wish to kill them. Forgiveness would only be possible if the attackers apologised. (Conditional forgiveness). E sees change in the perpetrators as the only means to forgiveness. (If they were to repent they would not be the people he described earlier?)</p> |

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| <p>me and under a, “I’m sorry what I did. I can’t pay you back, I cant take back what I did, um, I can’t re-fix your eye up or undo what I did to your wife”. Whatever it is, but, you know, and a truly repentant situation, I would, um, I would easily be able to forgive that situation. I really would, um, you know, I’m not saying that, ja, if they were, if they were, if they were to come to me in that tone, really I could. Ja, I think that how I’d, I’d actually cope with it. I’ve often wondered, um, either shortly before or after our incident, we had that, um, church in Cape Town, where the people walked in and mowed down people. That’s right, yes. And they interviewed a number of people out of there and there were a lot of correct Christian clichés, I won’t forgive them (inaudible). But one of the mothers, um, she said for me to get on with my life I need to forgive them. Okay, and then, and more importantly, if they had a repentant heart, I’d be able to deal with it a lot more. Then forgive them if they were still doing what they were doing. Okay and I, I think that’s very important. You know, you know, you can forgive, as long as there’s a reason to forgive. You know, whereas if they still running around looking for churches to mow down then, how can you be forgiving?</p> | |
| <p>42. Um, you CANNOT see, you can’t refer to them as animals, because there’s some good animals around! But it’s barbaric, um, what they did. And if they carry on like that, then, um, then I’ve got no sympathy for them ‘cause I need to forgive and forget so I can carry on, you know, I can’t live and dwell in the, in the horrible past forever.</p> | <p>E expresses a need to forgive the perpetrators but finds it impossible as he sees them as completely evil. He therefore cannot relate to them or understand them. E feels he is locked in the past because he cannot forgive.</p> |
| <p>43. You know, they’ve changed, haven’t they? They’ve changed, we’ve all made mistakes, um, and they’ve changed, it doesn’t make them, um, non-rapists, or a non-hi-jacker-holder up or whatever you want to call it, so he has once committed... you’re branded. but, you’ve got to, view them in a different light, um, because of the stand they made,</p> | <p>Forgiveness will only be possible for E when he is able to view the perpetrators differently, when they cease to be who they are and take on another identity. In this way E sees the action (crime) as comprising an individuals identity. An apology will enable E to see the human aspect of the perpetrators and prevent an ‘all bad’ perception of them thereby facilitating</p> |

they've made a change. You know, um, without, ones got to be so careful you don't bring all your supposedly Christian clichés back into it. But, um, we have been forgiven for much and, um, if they've made the change, then they've still done it, you can't change that. But it doesn't make them does of it. And, and that's where the difference comes in, ja, you know, you, you've got to recognise them for having made the change and the fact that they, um, are not only repentant, that are not following the ways that they were at that particular stage. Therefore, if they're not running around with a nine millimetre or whatever gun they had, um, holding up somebody and beating the hang out of them and they've just resorted to finding an honest way of earning their money or meeting their needs, um, then they are changed. They are reformed people. They, they're not the people they were.

forgiveness.

44. Do bad people do bad things? Yes, they do. Do, can bad things, do bad people always have to do bad things? No, they don't. And can they change? Yes, it's their choice. And I think, um, its very important for people to acknowledge that we all do various things because of our nature and whatever, things like that, but it is our choice...as to whether we actually do them or not. Um, over simplified. I have a lot of friends that we were at school with and you go into a, an army and you pick up bad language like it's going out of fashion. Um, I don't have a foul mouth and, but even under the circumstances, I came out of the army and I walked into my home and I didn't express a foul word from the time I walked out. And then you'd go with that same group of chaps that you are very civil and go back into an army situation and it's their CHOICE to use foul language. So, let's get back to, do bad things. Do bad people do bad things? It's all a matter of choice. You a bad person when you choose to do something bad. You know,

E construes people as bad if they make a choice to do bad things. Therefore he identifies the action with the person and cannot see them as separate. He seems to see choice as stronger than ones character or circumstances and this makes an individual inherently bad. He seems to struggle with the concept of circumstance eliminating choice.

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| <p>people will blame their breeding, their upbringing, their need, their greed for, to justify what they have done. Um, 10 years down the road, something's happened to change that reason and suddenly they're not running around with a nine millimetre, holding up, because they won the lotto and they don't need it anymore, or whatever, um, it's, whatever they aren't, um, they aren't resorting to that because they've actually made a choice... That's this is not a way to earn a living, going around holding up little shops and beating the hang out of everybody.</p> <p>You'll probably find that, probably a bad example, but if for any reason that they had been able to, um, change their way of life, and therefore become a productive person, that didn't resort to extreme violence, to, um, keep them in their needs. Um, ja, then it is a choice, it's a matter of choice.</p> | |
| <p>45. Um, no. What was very, very much affected, just to realise where your, um, where your friends lay. And where your support base came from. And you know, there's an expression, 'A friend in, a friend in need is a friend indeed.' And it sorts out your friends VERY, very quickly. Very quickly, I believe you me, um, it's that expression must never be taken so lightly. Because, as much as you want to associate with, um, what seemed to you as royalty and high and mighty. The help does often come from the poor and the paupers. And in our situation it was a classic, classic example, that those that we would have LOVED to, um, come and flood us with their sympathy... did not come. Some came, briefly, some forgot, came once and never returned. But those that absolutely supported us, were the not pretty, the not, um, successfully seen in society and things like that and it makes a re-evaluate where, um, your evaluation of people. Um, I know from my point of view, that, I</p> | <p>E sees people differently after the incident. He seems to generalise a group of people and label them as good and bad depending on their status. He construes the experience to have helped him see the real quality of people and to be less superficial. E expresses disappointment and hurt at the repose of those he thought of as friends. He sees himself as betrayed and let down by these people.</p> |

cannot be affected, I WILL not be affected, by a seemingly wealthy person over and above a poor person when it comes to real quality of a person. But, um, that's one BIG thing that came out in that, um, hold-up. You know, we had, um, church leaders that used the expression, "I didn't know it was as bad as it was." And you get other people that just pitched up, they didn't look at the scars and things like that and they said, "where, what and what can I do?" Or better still, they didn't even ask what they could do, they just got on and did. And that particular couple that, um, I'm referring to, um, they were at the bottom end of, what would you call, the social chain, in our circle, in our home group and everything. But, my, what a work they did for us. Well, yes, assess people for truly what they are. And its frivolous, um...

(Is this more so, after the event?)

Oh, absolutely, absolutely.

What was it like before?

I never picked it up. I've always been able to talk from, you know, top to the bottom. I'm a bit more uncomfortable with the, the 'upper-crust', so to say. But, um, it hasn't been me. But I have NO problem talking to, um, anybody. Tramp in the street, um, this weekend I went fishing. All fishermen are equal. It doesn't matter whether they arrive in broken takkies or a Pajero. But once they on the rock, they all equal. It's one sport that doesn't separate anybody. And I saw it this weekend, I absolutely, it amazes me and, um, and this incident just made me, just realise what, am, being held up and where you expect your help from, doesn't include every fisherman. Because there are those that just, it's below them to bother about you. And there are those that'll rise up to the occasion and give everything they've got and more, till it hurts them. It's an incredible, valuable lesson to learn. And a lot of people go through life and not learn it. All they want to do is just, socialise with, uh, um, seemingly 'upper-crust' or people above them. Elevating themselves by

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| <p>association with somebody else instead of elevating themselves.</p> | |
| <p>46. I don't know how the world comes into it, but you see, South Africa, we were a trusting people, that didn't bother about locking everything. Trusting emphatically under ALL circumstances. And, um, all of a sudden, a sensibility has to prevail. Um, that you can't just blindly, I do, I blindly trust anybody and everybody. Um, I still do, I'm very harshly criticised for it. Um, it's in my nature, I would rather trust a person till they've, done something to, um, to prove me wrong, rather than the other way round is to not trust them until I've eaten a whole bag of salt, to know that they are trustworthy.</p> <p>When a person says they're going to, um, can I deliver so much wood and I'll pay you next week, I, to have said so, your words your word, it's adequate <i>(But in terms of being hurt, or in your family being hurt. Like for example if someone phoned again and said this granny's sick, would you...?)</i></p> <p>No, I'd still help. Ja, yes, ja. You would, you just go in with your eyes open this time. You know, you don't turn your back on the door and you, you know, you call that particular incident, um, you know, you'd probably have, the hair on the nape of your neck would be raised all the time. And you're very sensitive to it.</p> | <p>E sees himself as trusting but more sensible and cautious since the event. (E attempts to assert his good self-representation as one that is trusting and helpful). However, he experiences others as more threatening.</p> |
| <p>47. And like I said to you, that, um, given the same circumstances again, I would never have reacted passively. For the same reason, that if I was, um, you're much, MUCH more alert, to, um, to things, not because you distrust, just because it's, you know. Ja, um, if you've been clapped once, why get clapped twice. And since and, um, we know that South Africa is very unsafe. I don't know if it</p> | <p>E feels a sense of failure in not maintaining masculine, protective self-representation and allowing his family to get hurt. He attempts to reassert this self-representation by resolving to fight back and defend himself and his family. E experiences a heightened consciousness of threat.</p> |

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| <p>prevails throughout the world and I've still, am too lax on security, even in my own home right now. Because, I'm either lazy or trusting! I'd rather think it's trusting!</p> | |
| <p>48. (<i>Okay. Um, I think I've asked you this one, but, why do you think that the perpetrators did this?</i>) Greed. Absolute greed. It wasn't a case of necessity. It wasn't a case of, um, this is the way I earn my living. Um, it was greed and barbarianism. I mean, if they were hungry, they need a meal. It's not a legitimate way of earning an income and its extreme bully tactics, um, and ja, it's, it's just straight barbaric, um, greed. It's not taking from the rich to give to the poor. It's certainly not, um, Robin Hood by any, any means what-so-ever. And, um, ja, it's, you cannot, I cannot, uh, sympathise with their cause, for doing it what-so-ever. There's no political agenda about it. There's no money requirement, there was, ja.</p> | <p>E sees the perpetrators as intentionally and inherently bad. It is the consciousness of their motive that prevents him from forgiving them. He sees them as acting out of malicious intent rather than out of need or circumstance.</p> |
| <p>49. You know, Nicky, not only did they hold up everything of ours, and take everything from us. They left us in a situation where the system, the world system didn't allow us, time to work out how we did or didn't feel about them. Um, we had a REASONABLY good business, that, certainly didn't have 136 000 rand, um, just to go and splash and to take away. We had, um, an overdraft to meet, and they took the money out of the overdraft, that they took the monies that would more than offset the overdraft, um, the 29 000 rand they took, had that gone to the bank, we would have sorted out the overdraft, we would have sorted out all the respective cheques that had to follow, and be paid and things like that. So, not only did they take the 29, they took another 136, we needed a pickup, we needed our things and um, there was just, there was just no time. You know, I reckon if I had just curled up in bed and tried to sleep it off for a month or</p> | <p>E construes the attackers as taking everything from him and leaving him to suffer with the consequences. He seems to have deep contempt for the attackers.</p> <p>E sees himself as having extreme pressure and enormous responsibility, which does not allow him to sort out his emotions or reflect on his feelings.</p> <p>He sees the world as harsh, cruel and unrelenting. He sees himself as trapped, uncared for and unprotected.</p> |

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| <p>something like that, we'd probably have lost the whole lot. We're already in times where, shops like us, were battling through whatever reasons they were, um, and to now go off and take time to try and get over it. It'd probably have cost us our business and our livelihood.</p> | |
| <p>50. And it's the way I view, and I know a lot of people criticise me for it, but, um, there just was no time. There was no time to sit down and try and get my emotions right. Get, take the bot...emotions put them under a champagne cork and when they blow one day, then they'll blow. And as of yet they haven't.</p> | <p>E attempts to avoid dealing with his emotions although he knows this may be detrimental to him. (Safer and more controllable to bury emotions)</p> |
| <p>51. I'll kill anybody that touches my wife again. I won't even be able to hide it, anybody that holds me up again, has got to understand they are asking for me to kill them, because if they don't, I don't kill them and they head for my wife...I would have lost the battle. So, I've got revenge against those, those, no.</p> | <p>E's representation changes from P to my wife. He seems to assert his masculine self-image. Revenge is a way to re-establish his strong and good self-representation.</p> |
| <p>52 Under similar circumstances...they would, thing is, you brought up, um, something the other day and you said, do you have an anger against them? I don't know them. And, you said it and I can identify with it. Um, I don't know them. I don't know them from a bar of soap. Any yellow chap with small ears, I'd have a look at him twice, 'cause he's the chap that molested my wife. Possibly the ONLY one that I can remember. I've never seen them, well, I wouldn't know them if I had passed them in the street today. You know, we had the telephone calls after that, the threatening telephone calls but, um, you still can't put a face. Just because you look yellow and small ears and you're about the right size doesn't mean to say I can go and take your head off</p> | <p>E struggles to contemplate feeling anger toward someone he does not know. It is impossible for him to relate to the attackers.</p> |
| <p>53. <i>(Do you think it's possible to forgive people and still get justice?)</i> Absolutely.</p> | <p>E sees forgiveness and justice as able to coexist.</p> |

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| <p>54. <i>(Okay, just with regard to your spirituality. Um, do you want to just maybe tell me a bit more about how your spirituality helped you cope?)</i></p> <p>I felt so strongly that we had had God’s support in that, there, that I was prepared to testify it, about it ANYWHERE, anybody who wanted...I was prepared to tell them about it. Not for my glory, not for my self-pity, but for the, um, to give God the glory on it. Um, I didn’t do it as a, as a way of drawing attention to myself. I didn’t ask people to do that. But you wander around, um, the countryside with a massive patch over your eye and your face is predominantly fifty percent of my face was, um, blue. It was like that for nearly a month, so everybody asks, what happened to you. You know, um, and it was just a golden opportunity to just be able to share God’s absolute strength and glory on it.</p> <p><i>(Do you feel, if I were to ask you, whether it, um, strengthened or weakened your spirituality, what would you say?)</i></p> <p>Absolutely strengthened.</p> <p>There’s no doubt about it. Nicky, we never would have got through that trauma, without knowing that God was on our side.</p> <p>We would have never, ever got through, I mean, aside from the miracle happening, possibly the miracle happening helps us, um, trust God. You know, um, makes it that much easier to say, God was there for me.</p> <p>And therefore He’ll be there for me now.</p> <p>Um, and I, from what I gather and hear, I’ve got through it a lot easier than what a lot of other people have got through.</p> <p>But by the same token, uh, He was there for me then and I’ve given Him glory throughout the whole lot. But, I’ll tell you what, every time we write a story for Joy magazine, man we nearly lost everything in our business, in fact we have telephone calls...the day we had that interview, with Joy magazine, we had threatening telephone calls like it was coming</p> | <p>E sees God as protecting and construes his situation as a battle of good against evil. He is conscious of Gods goodness and power as well as persecutory forces he construes as evil and attacking him. E sees the event as strengthening his spirituality. He sees himself as persecuted by spiritual forces.</p> |
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| <p>out of fashion, we had all sorts of spiritual attacks. Now I'm not trying to over spiritualise the situation,</p> | |
| <p>55. But the number of times we testified to groups, over and above just the odd person here and there, we seem to have come under some form of, um, attack sounds vicious. But, things seem to not go right on those particular days. Whether it would have been financial, whether it would have been, I can't remember. Predominantly financial, or, um, something wrong in the business, or someone didn't pay an account or something went wrong with the car. Um, so whether there was a spiritual connection to that, or not, I have no idea. What I DO know, is that we believe in God, trusted God and we all came through it well.</p> | <p>E continues to see his actions as part of a spiritual battle.</p> |
| <p>56. It concerns me, my son's reaction to it. The other day, subsequent to the first interview. And, uh, that he wants it so far behind him that he doesn't ever want to talk about it again. That can only mean that he hasn't actually dealt with it. <i>(Ja, did he have any counselling or anything?)</i> Um, once or twice, but nothing was really, um, he wasn't the one that had to go back. One of the other kids, one of the, uh, J went back a couple of times. No. S's been mad. S's had a very aggressive and mad teenage stage. He's just turned, what, 19 now. And he's still, that happened at 10...that's nine years ago. You know, get over it, get past it, um, <i>(He was young...).</i> But still, Nicky, that was nine years ago. Get over it. I mean, even this country's changed since then.</p> | <p>E expresses contempt at others inability to contain their emotions and to be strong. E sees himself as being strong by being able to contain his emotions.</p> |
| <p>57. And, um, ja, and I think there's a lot, not that I've known at the time, but I do know now that he, uh, definitely has not thought me the</p> | <p>E is conscious of his son's disappointment for his passive response. E feels his son blames him for allowing the incident to happen by not</p> |

greatest under all circumstances because of my passit...passivity in not wanting to probably break every black mans neck, that even HALF, crosses my paths. Um, I've gathered in the last year or so that this is the way things were seen and um, whether it was a teenage stage or whether he is actually blaming this incident and the way I've coped with it, or, or rather, the way I've handled it. Um, that distresses me, but I, I cannot change who I am. And, um, if I've chosen to forgive, forget and move on and when I forgive and forget, I do NOT remember, it's not my choice to remember. So, it's, once again, like I said to you, it's a choice. Do I dwell on the past and 'woe-me', or do I pick up my things and keep going, where I want to go.

He asked me whether I see people as untrustworthy. S sees EVERYBODY as untrustworthy. He sees EVERYBODY as a threat, sees EVERYBODY as a...just as I think as a lot of people expect me to go through it. Um, I didn't, S took it out on my behalf. And even as a 10 year old, he's um, he stopped trusting a lot of people. Some of his finest friends are, um, are black people. D from C High hockey team is a good friend of his and is still a good friend of his. He's at C now, um, predominantly, what would you call it? A group of kids that came up, probably from more, from, of the racist side... South Africa and, um, he's not easily made black friends there, if at all. And he's been quite easily swayed by, um, the kids that definitely come from more racist type, um, backgrounds. And unfortunately the farming community is probably THE most racist in this country. So being at C hasn't helped that aspect of his what-so-ever. And, um, staff that look after him, he's working for me at the moment. He really enjoys it, but expects his pounds worth of meat out of each. But, um, those that mess him around, or those that cross his paths, he has got, not little time, he has got NO time for, what-so-ever. Regardless of who they are,

resisting.

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| <p>where they fit in my scale of employment, whether they are top one or bottom one. Once they cross S, they are off his list and they have to do an awful amount to get back into it.</p> | |
| <p>58. (<i>So you feel that you would say he hasn't forgiven them?</i>) Absolutely. (<i>And do you think that it has affected his spiritual life in any way?</i>) Yes, 100 percent. It's just um, he cannot look at a black man without being drawn in just thinking about it. And, um, without, aggressively, um, hanging about, saying his comments about it. And you find he bottles a lot. And because of who I am, he's probably not so vocal, because... I just won't allow anybody to mouth off anything unnecessary or bad about anybody. Um, not especially because it's black, but just because of, it's anybody. It's, um, so he's probably had to bottle it, but by the same token, um, as we've got to know him more and we've slowed down enough to know him, we've realised that there is a lot of anger in the kid. A lot of anger.</p> | <p>E is conscious of the anger and resentment in his son.</p> |
| <p>59. (<i>Um, generally, what do you think the, the consequences of unforgiveness are, spiritually?</i>) Bottled up anger and unreasonability like you've, cannot believe. (<i>And how'd that affect your spiritual life?</i>)</p> <p>It's got to close it, it's got to close that door. Um, alright, I used to run...have a group and I had a vision once, of talking about spirituality. Um, your association with God, if you follow the laws of prayer, um, one of the first things you do is ask for forgiveness. Um, if you, want an association with God and you have unforgiveness in you, I don't believe you have contact with God. And I put it like a...Do you know that when you in a ship and they've got those blowpipes going down into</p> | <p>E sees unforgiveness as leading to anger and distorted perceptions. E sees his own forgiveness as dependent on his forgiveness of others. E sees himself as dependent on God for forgiveness.</p> |

the engine room. Ay, you know, so many to the right, so many to the left and whatever it is. And I had the vision of our contact with God, that you'd yell up the pipe, "Hi God...Hey." Ja, whatever's happening. And the minute you've got unforgiveness in it, it was like tying a knot in a straw. You can't suck the juice through anymore. 'Oh, God.' And all you do is get an echo back in your ears because he can't hear because there's unforgiveness. And, it is, life has proven to me time and time again, that those people that are unable to forgive, generally are unable to receive the absolute, absolute, joy and pleasure of having an association with God and a lot of other people and, and a non-forgiving person is really, um, a tough nut, a bitter person.

A fine spirituality, you supposed to get arthritis and all sorts of things like that. And that's just because you're a bitter old crony in the first place. Um, but, unforgiveness really releases an incredible amount of joy in anybody. And if you don't, you robbing yourself of it.

60. *(Okay, um, if I were to ask you to define forgiveness, how would you define it?)*

It's unconditional. Forgetting, remembering ONLY the experience for the purpose of, um, not repeating the same mistake.

I can forgive those chaps for holding us up. I can put it so far behind me that it will never affect me, for, never affect me again. But I will NEVER, not gain the life experiences out of that. In other words, if I'm held up again, I have set myself a, what would you say, aim. Goal. Whatever it is, to deal with it. Because I will NOT allow my family...to be affected again. But, I won't allow it. I won't dwell on that to, that's a waste of time.

Okay, so forgiving, would you describe it as, almost like a releasing of, possibly your hatred towards them...

Yes.

or anger...

Yes.

E equates forgiveness with forgetting.

He experiences guilt resulting from a failure to protect his family and live up to his masculine self-representation.

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| <p>You can still remember and you glean out of it what you need to glean out of it and everything else you chuck into file 13. And throw it far away.</p> | |
| <p>61. (<i>What qualities do you think that a, that a person needs in order to forgive?</i>) A memory. They need a memory to realise how much they have been forgiven for. You know, so many people say, “I’m not prepared to forgive you for, bla bla bla...” whatever it happens to be. Um, and yet they themselves expect to be forgiven for every little transgression that they have done and whether it be against God or whether against another person. Um, a person who, um, possibly, where you see it most is a person who is an unforgiving driver. They’re allowed to overtake on a barrier line, but let them, let somebody do it to them...oh, it’s a different can of fish. You know, kind of, it’s, it’s completely a different story and um, what was your question there?</p> | <p>E sees forgiveness as only possible when a person can identify with the transgressor by admitting and remembering his own fault (humility and empathy). E seems to be speaking theoretically rather than from experience.</p> |
| <p>62. <i>Um, what qualities do you think a person needs?</i> It, it is, I mean, you’ve been forgiven for so much, apart from the spiritual point of view. You have been forgiven, I mean, you do something wrong and somebody says, and you say, “I’m sorry, I’m truly sorry.” And if, they choose to, if the person for...says, “Ja, I’m sorry. You know, I really am truly sorry for doing this to you, Nicky, really.” And you say, “Okay, fine. Dead right.” And the next time you meet up, do you remember? That’s not forgiving. That’s now bringing it back. So, um, a person who doesn’t forgive easily, um, will always expect somebody else to not remember the situation.</p> | |
| <p>63. (<i>So do you just want to maybe just briefly say what your relationship with your parents is like?</i>) I have an incredible relationship with my parents. My, um, my mom and dad have</p> | <p>E construes himself as completely opposite to his father who he sees as mean, unkind and unforgiving. It is interesting that he uses some of the same adjectives to describe his father as he uses to describe the perpetrators.</p> |

separated. Um, dads with my brother in H, taking a very tough time. My dad, with my brother in H, um, things are not rosy at the moment. He, I, was with him yesterday. I spent four hours with him yesterday. He is my father, out of respect, I will always spend time with him. It's not a good morning to have raised this subject, but anyway. On a weekend off, he's spent four times, four hours with me. Where I should have spent it with my wife, according to my wife. So, I love him dearly, he is my father. I respect him. **He's not always been kind to me. He is a very unforgiving man**, um, he's a very, um, he doesn't mince his words and he doesn't, he almost is a bully in the way he...I'd almost say, with incredible respect, um, has pleasure in his bully tactics...and comments and out of respect as a son, "Yes Dad, no Dad, three bags full Dad." But my final response to it is, um, what I do about what he said is my choice, at the end of the day, but, um, so I roll with the punches, and, um, Dad's very hardly criticised and Mom on the other hand is like me. She's a soft, she's very forgiving, um, one who uses life experiences to her advantage, without any malice what-so-ever, um... Ja and they're so different it's just not true. They are so chalk and cheese. And they couldn't be together in their, in the same, under the same roof indefinitely. I mean she can walk in and um, there would be some barbed remark, whether it be her dress, her hair, her outfit or her...whatever it is. It's barbed, it's um, it's his style. Dad's style. And Mom would roll with the punches, realised that, whew, I had better get a divorce from this man, because I couldn't put up with it for another...what? You know, they were married for what? 24 years? It is, ja, no, they, they both individually very great people. B, um, my dads been very hurt by my brother, who's identical to my dad. Barbaric, almost. Um, no, he's really, very rough, very unforgiving. Um, there's a difference between calling a spade a spade and having good manners. My dad and my brother are, when

On the other hand he identifies himself with his mother who he construes as forgiving and kind.

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| <p>they, hand out tact, they were, weren't in the queue.</p> | |
| <p>64. <i>(laugh) Okay, um, I think that's about it. Are there any questions you would like to ask or things you would like just to add before we finish?</i></p> <p>You asked a question, which I didn't answer earlier on, for people who, you refer to your groups as people that do forgive and people that, who don't forgive. Um, under this circumstance, I've forgiven and we've moved on.</p> <p>And there have been other incidents in my life which have caused me to also, have to take, long before from pre-schools or junior schools and right up to recent, where unpleasant things have happened and ja, maybe unforgiving people are forgiving people.</p> <p>Ja, It's been, it's been (inaudible), I won't say taught to us, because Dad's not a, hasn't taught us that.</p> <p>He would claim he has, but he certainly isn't, um, whereas mom IS and, um, but, ja, if people are forgiving people, they generally are forgiving under ALL circumstances.</p> <p>And, um, the forgiveness in our life, through this hold-up and whatever's happened since. Really, it's tested every now and then as to what extent you will forgive.</p> <p><i>(Okay, do you feel that maybe forgiveness is a process and that you have to continually have to forgive, not just once off?)</i></p> <p>It's not a once off process. It's NEVER a once off thing. It's, um, you can't forgive one situation and not the next. Ja, okay then, anything else?</p> <p><i>(No, that's fine.)</i></p> <p>Okay, thanks Nicky.</p> <p><i>(Thank you).</i></p> | <p>E construes himself as having forgiven (questionable??)</p> |

Step 4: Regrouping of transformed meaning units to form a cohesive narrative

The world before victimisation

Self

He sees himself as trusting and does not anticipate danger. Consequently, when he receives a call for help he takes action immediately to assist without question. E construes himself as strong, reliable and helpful. His self-representation is one of strength, protection and goodness.

Others

E sees others as basically good

Spirituality

He sees God as good, loving and protecting.

The world during victimisation

Self

E is severely beaten by the perpetrators who render him completely powerless. He surrenders to their demands without resistance. E is confronted with a sense of deep helplessness as the perpetrators attempt to sexually assault his wife and threaten his children. His strong, masculine and protective self-representation is shattered leaving him to face a weak and fragile sense of self. He experiences himself as powerless, vulnerable, scared and defeated.

Personal relationships

E is conscious of the fear and helplessness of his wife and children. He construes them as helpless and defenceless. He is also conscious of his wife's desperate plea for help.

Perpetrators

E and his family are attacked and beaten by several armed men. E sees the attackers as brutal, irrational and calculating. He sees them as acting out of cruelty and for selfish reasons. He discounts the possibility of circumstances in the attackers actions. He sees them as inhuman and below animals making them 'monsters' in his mind, which makes it impossible to relate to them or to contemplate feeling emotion towards them. He construes them as being 'all bad.'

Spirituality

He anticipates death at which point he becomes conscious of God. He sees God as in control of everything and prays to him to change the situation and rescue them. As E is chanting and praying the attackers become uncomfortable and flee the scene. E construes this as an act of God and God's protection. In addition, the attackers were unable to commit the rape as they became impotent. E also construes this as God's power and action. E sees God as more powerful than the perpetrators. He sees God as powerful, caring and protecting. He attempts to regain his sense of strength and control through God.

The struggle against victimisation

Self

E became intensely fearful when the attackers fled, as he would have to face his emotion and his family's distress. He experiences a failure in his self-representation as a protecting and strong husband and father. E attempts to avoid these feelings by keeping busy and talking only of the factual content of the event and keeping away from emotional content. In addition he attempts to reclaim his sense of control and power by avoiding emotions and being distracted by work and activity. He construes emotion and despair as an indication of weakness, which further threatens to erode his self-representation. He also attempts to reinforce his masculine self-representation by being emotionally strong.

Others

E immediately attends to the needs of others once they have escaped detrimentality. E tends to polarise certain groups of individuals as either good or bad. He sees the police as a whole as neglectful and incompetent. He views his close friends and family as caring and concerned and he construes church leaders as hypocritical and false. In this way he splits them into good and bad.

Personal Relationships

E also seems to see emotional turmoil and expression as a sign of weakness. He sees his wife as being severely physically as well as emotionally traumatised.

E sees his close friends as caring and helpful.

He sees his friend J as very helpful

E construes some of his church friends and family as caring and concerned.

P suffered from past traumatic amnesia for a month

Perpetrators

P continues to construe the attackers as completely bad.

World, Life and Justice

E experiences a heightened consciousness of threat.

Spirituality

E construes God as powerful, protecting and trustworthy. He expresses annoyance at others disbelief of the intervention. E construes God as continuing to care for them by allowing them to talk about the event many times to facilitate their coping. E seems also to use his spirituality as a means to avoid the emotional content of the event and to deny his emotions.

The new world after victimisation with unforgiveness

Self

E continues to avoid expressing and contemplating emotion connected to the event and the perpetrators. He fears the loss of control, which the expression may entail, which may serve to further damage his self-representation of control and power. Ironically he sees emotional expression as a sign of weakness when in fact he lacks the courage at present to face these emotions and integrate them into his self-representation. E construes life as a consequence of one's choices thereby claiming one is in complete control of ones life. This may be an attempt to reclaim a sense of control in ones life and to rebuild his self-representation.

E experiences underlying feelings of guilt for failing to protect his family and for failing to live up to and maintain his dominant self representation. This fuels his desire to take revenge against the attackers.

Others

E sees people, as acting out of choice and does not seem to take into account past history and circumstances. E labels others as good or bad depending on their "internal quality". E construes the experience to have helped him see the real quality of people. He seems to have extreme perspectives regarding different groups of people idealising some and despising others. He seems to have anger and resentment for those he experienced as neglecting him and not meeting his needs (may remind him of his own failure to protect).

Personal Relationships

E experiences discomfort in his relationship with his son. He is conscious of his son's anger and resentment toward him for failing to protect the family. P changes from "P" to "my wife/my woman" when E begins to talk about revenge. In this way she becomes an object used to carry out his desire to reassert dominant self-representation.

E seems to polarise his father and mother. He seems to view his father as bad and his mother as good.

Perpetrators

E sees the attackers as completely bad and is unable to see them as anything else. He sees them as acting out of malicious intent rather than out of need or circumstance. He

construes them as inhuman, unable to care and purely evil rather than a product of circumstance. E has deep anger and hatred toward the perpetrators and expresses a desire to kill them.

E struggles to relate or compare himself with the attackers. He sees the perpetrators as completely opposite to himself. He construes himself as the hero wanting to help and the perpetrators as evil, wanting to harm. However, at one point when talking theoretically he admits all people make mistakes and need forgiveness.

World, Life and Justice

E struggles with contemplating the meaning of the event although he sees the event as having some wider purpose in life. Contemplating a purpose may challenge his character and remind him of his failed self-representation.

He seems to be more comfortable with talking about circumstantial reasons for the crime. E experiences a heightened consciousness of threat.

Step 5: Central themes

1. Self

- (a) E sees himself as helpful, strong, productive and needed by others (1, 2).
- (b) As a result of the attack E experiences a shift in his self-representation to someone that is vulnerable, violated, weak and helpless as well as robbed of all autonomy (3, 7, 5, 9, 11, 13, 15).
- (c) E experienced intense fear after the attack. (14, 15).
- (d) E attempts to reassert his strong, needed and in control self-representation in a number of ways by denying his own needs and attending to others (15) by attempting to contain and even deny his own emotional response to the attack (21, 22, 23, 30) by holding himself responsible for the attack and feeling a sense of guilt (34, 35, 36, 47, 60) by seeing himself as good (40).

2. Others

- (a) E sees others as trustworthy before the attack (2).
- (b) He sees others as needing him especially his family in the incident whom he sees as helpless and defenceless (4, 5).
- (c) He construes the police as incompetent and neglectful (16)
- (d) Following the attack he begins to see others as more threatening (26) and sees himself as betrayed and let down by others (28, 29, 45) He also seems to see others as completely good or completely bad (30, 45).
- (E) E sees a certain group of others as unconcerned, uncaring and judgmental

3. Personal Relationships

- (a) E sees himself as loved and cared for by his family and friends (6, 17).
- (b) During the ordeal he sees his wife and children as helpless, vulnerable and extremely traumatised (19).
- (c) E seems to idealise his mother and devalue his father (63).

4. Life and World

- (a) Prior to the attack E is largely conscious of the positive aspect of his world.
- (b) However, after the attack E begins to see the world as stressful, unhelpful and unrelenting (25, 49) as well as unpredictable (26). E seems to have an increased consciousness of threat in his world (47).
- (c) E struggles to contemplate a purpose or meaning to the event in his life but seems to attribute the occurrence to circumstantial reasons. (31, 33).

5. Perpetrators

- (a) E seems to construe the attackers as completely bad seeing them as brutal, aggressive and dangerous (3, 4, 7, 13, 19, 35, 37, 38). He cannot separate their actions from their character (43).
- (b) E sees their motive as sinister and intentionally malicious as choosing to commit a crime rather than being victims of circumstance (6, 37, 48).
- (c) E seems to see them as monsters or inhuman in some way (7, 11, 15, and 37).
- (c) E construes the perpetrators as having complete control and robbing him of his autonomy (8, 35).
- (d) E expresses a deep anger or hatred toward the attackers and a need to have revenge against them (38, 41, 49, 51).
- (e) E sees the perpetrators as completely opposite to himself and cannot relate to them (40, 42).