

**AN INVESTIGATION INTO THE STRUCTURE AND PROCESS OF
FORGIVENESS FOLLOWING GROSS HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS**

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ABSTRACT

This study focuses on the structure and process of forgiveness as experienced by individuals, from the East London and surrounding areas, who either suffered gross human rights violations or who are related to someone who suffered gross human rights violations during the Apartheid era. Those who participated in the study testified at the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and expressed forgiveness towards the perpetrators of the violations. The aims of the study were to reveal: the participants' structure of forgiveness, i.e. how they define forgiveness; the process of forgiveness, i.e. the changes that took place from the time of the violation up until the participants forgave the perpetrators; and, the relation, if any, between the participants' structure and process of forgiveness. It is argued that mainstream Psychology has neglected to study forgiveness because the subject matter is incompatible with the natural scientific method. For this reason, the study was approached from a hermeneutical paradigm. This was motivated by its ability to explicate the meaning and content of phenomena. Unstructured qualitative interviews were conducted with the participants. Data was analyzed using a multi-layered process of progressively deeper interpretation, employing a reading guide technique. Results indicated that authentic forgiveness is an unconditional commitment on the part of victims and survivors to relate positively towards the perpetrators. The relationship should include non-bitterness, non-vengeance, unconditional love and respect for their human rights. Another significant dimension of the structure of forgiveness is the fact that the desire for the truth is not abandoned although forgiveness has taken place. Forgiveness also does not take away the effects of the violation. This means that one does not forget although forgiveness has been granted. Results further indicate that the forgiveness process is highly complex, individualized and not instantaneous. The individuals have to deal with various intrapersonal conflicts and anxieties as a result of the violation, before forgiveness is explored as an option, and before they can finally forgive. Significant interrelations between the structure and process of forgiveness were also identified.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION _____	1
1. Motivation for the study _____	2
2. Conceptual framework for the study _____	3
2.1. An interpretative paradigm _____	3
2.2. The research question _____	4
2.3. The method _____	4
3. The study process _____	5
 CHAPTER 2. THE SOCIO-HISTORICAL CONTEXT OF THE STUDY _____	 7
1. Introduction _____	7
2. South Africa under Apartheid _____	8
2.1. Grand-Apartheid (1948-1983) _____	8
2.2. Reformed Apartheid (1984-1990) _____	10
2.3. The Transition to Democracy _____	13
3. Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) _____	15
3.1. Why face the past _____	16
3.2. Comparison between the TRC and the experiences in other countries _____	17
3.3. Objections against the TRC _____	18
3.4. The functions and structure of the TRC _____	19
3.4.1 Aims and objectives _____	19
3.4.2. Functions _____	20
3.4.3. Structure _____	22
4. Conclusion _____	25

CHAPTER 3.	THEORETICAL CONTEXT	26
1.	Introduction	26
2.	Definition	29
2.1.	Christian definitions	29
2.2.	Interpersonal definitions	30
2.3.	Adopting a suitable definition for the study	31
3.	Forgiveness and terms in which definitions of forgiveness are frequently embedded	32
3.1.	Forgiveness and Christianity	32
3.2.	Forgiveness and Morality	33
3.3.	Forgiveness and Reconciliation	34
3.4.	Forgiveness and Confession	36
3.5.	Forgiveness and Anger	37
3.6.	Forgiveness and Apology	39
4.	The therapeutic value of forgiveness	40
5.	Objections raised against forgiveness	42
6.	The structure of forgiveness	44
7.	The process of forgiveness	46
8.	Conclusion	50
CHAPTER 4.	METATHEORETICAL CONTEXT	51
1.	Introduction	51
2.	Paradigms	51

3.	The interpretative paradigm	52
3.1.	Core components of the interpretative paradigm	53
3.1.1.	The text as the focus of interpretation	54
3.1.2.	Interpretation	55
3.1.3.	The hermeneutic circle	57
3.1.4.	The fore-structure	58
3.2.	Validity in interpretation	59
4.	Dimensions of the interpretative paradigm	61
4.1.	Ontological dimension	61
4.2.	Epistemological dimension	62
4.3.	Teleological dimension	62
5.	Conclusion	63
CHAPTER 5.	THE STUDY	64
1.	Introduction	64
2.	Aims of the study	64
3.	Conceptualization of key terms	65
3.1.	The structure of forgiveness	65
3.2.	The process of forgiveness	65
3.3.	Victims and survivors	66
3.4.	Gross human rights violations	66
4.	Sampling	67
4.1.	Accessing participants	67
4.2.	Selection criteria	68
4.3.	Profile of interview participants	68

5. The research design _____	69
5.1. PHASE 1: DATA COLLECTION _____	71
5.2. PHASE 2: PREPARATION OF DATA FOR INTERPRETATION _____	71
5.3. PHASE 3: INTERPRETATION OF EACH INDIVIDUAL PARTICIPANT'S STRUCTURE AND PROCESS OF FORGIVENESS FOLLOWING GROSS HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS _____	72
5.3.1. Stage 1: Filtering of data _____	72
5.3.2. Stage 2.: Interpretive analysis of each individual interview with the aim of identifying the structure of forgiveness _____	74
5.3.3. Stage 3: Interpretive analysis of each individual interview with the aim of identifying the process of forgiveness _____	75
5.3.4. Stage 4: Examination of the relationship between the process and structure of each individual participant _____	78
5.4. PHASE 4: COMPARISON OF THE PROCESS AND STRUCTURE OF FORGIVENESS ACROSS INDIVIDUALS _____	79
5.5. PHASE 5: CONTEXTUALIZATION OF INTERPRETIVE RESULTS WITHIN THE LITERATURE _____	80
6. Ethical issues in qualitative interviewing _____	81
6.1. Informed consent _____	81
6.2. Confidentiality _____	82

**CHAPTER 6. THE STRUCTURE AND PROCESS OF FORGIVENESS AS
EXPERIENCED BY EACH INDIVIDUAL PARTICIPANT __84**

1. Introduction _____	84
2. Participant One _____	85
2.1. The context of the act of forgiveness _____	85
2.2. The structure of forgiveness _____	85
2.3. The process of forgiveness _____	87
2.4. The relationship between the structure and process of forgiveness _____	91

3. Participant Two	92
3.1. The context of the act of forgiveness	92
3.2. The structure of forgiveness	93
3.3. The process of forgiveness	94
3.4. The relationship between the structure and process of forgiveness	99
4. Participant Three	99
4.1. The context of the act of forgiveness	99
4.2. The structure of forgiveness	101
4.3. The process of forgiveness	103
4.4. The relationship between the structure and process of forgiveness	107
5. Participant Four	108
5.1. The context of the act of forgiveness	108
5.2. The structure of forgiveness	109
5.3. The process of forgiveness	111
5.4. The relationship between the structure and process of forgiveness	113
6. Participant Five	114

**CHAPTER 7. THE STRUCTURE AND PROCESS OF FORGIVENESS
ACROSS INDIVIDUAL PARTICIPANTS** 117

1. Introduction	117
2. The structure of forgiveness across individual participants	117
3. The process of forgiveness across individual participants	121
4. The relationship between the structure and process of forgiveness across individual participants	128
4.1. The presence of the effects after forgiveness	128
4.2. Not-forgetting	129

4.3. Non-vengeance	129
4.4. Non-bitterness	129
4.5. Face-to-face contact	130
4.6. Truth	130
4.7. Closure	130

CHAPTER 8. CONTEXTUALISATION OF RESULTS WITHIN THE LITERATURE _____ 131

1. Introduction	131
2. The structure of forgiveness following gross human rights violations	132
3. The process of forgiveness following gross human rights violations	135
3.1. Preforgiveness intrapersonal conflict	136
3.2. Additional anxieties and their effects	138
3.3. Exploring forgiveness as an option	139
3.4. Acceptance and forgiving	141

CHAPTER 9. CONCLUSION _____ 142

1. Introduction	142
2. Reflecting on the aims of the study	142
3. Reflecting on the difficult nature of doing this type of research	145
3.1. Data collection	145
3.2. Data analysis	146
4. Recommendations	146

APPENDICES

REFERENCES

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1.	A process model of forgiveness (Enright & The Human Development Study Group, 1991) _____	47
Table 2.	Profile of interview participants _____	69
Table 3.	Themes and indicators related to the structure of forgiveness for Participant One _____	87
Table 4.	Themes and indicators related to the process of forgiveness for Participant One _____	88
Table 5.	Themes and indicators related to the structure of forgiveness for Participant Two _____	93
Table 6.	Themes and indicators related to the process of forgiveness for Participant Two _____	95
Table 7.	Themes and indicators related to the structure of forgiveness for Participant Three _____	102
Table 8.	Themes and indicators related to the process of forgiveness for Participant Three _____	104
Table 9.	Themes and indicators related to the structure of forgiveness for Participant Four _____	110
Table 10.	Themes and indicators related to the process of forgiveness for Participant Four _____	111

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1.	Schematic representation of the research design _____	70
Figure 2.	Distribution of the themes related to the structure of forgiveness across individual participants _____	118
Figure 3.	Distribution of the themes related to the process of forgiveness across individual participants _____	123

LIST OF APPENDICES

- Appendix 1. Example of the extraction of the central parts of the interview text.
- Appendix 2. Example of a brainstorming session of extracted data.
- Appendix 3. Example of the process of developing themes with relevance to the structure of forgiveness.
- Appendix 4. Example of the process of establishing relationships between structural themes.
- Appendix 5. Example of the process of developing themes with relevance to the process of forgiveness.
- Appendix 6. Example of further examination of the process of forgiveness using a reading guide consisting of four questions.
- Appendix 7. Example of the process of establishing relationships between process themes.
- Appendix 8. First reading guide used in the interpretive analytical process (phase 3, stage 3, step 2 - further examination of the process of forgiveness).

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CHAPTER 1.

INTRODUCTION

On 19th May 1995 President Nelson Mandela signed into law, the Promotion of National Unity and Reconciliation Act No. 34, (1995). This Act made provision for the creation of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC), which had as its main objective, the provision of a complete picture as possible of the causes, nature and extent of past human rights abuses. The Commission was a bold effort aimed at rescuing the country from denial and lies about the past, to give dignity to those who had suffered, and to forgive those responsible for human rights abuses. While the creation of the TRC was met with opposition from both sides of the political spectrum, its goal was to provide South African society with a platform on which forgiveness and reconciliation could be facilitated by dealing with the problems and injustices of the past in a responsible manner. It was hoped that this would pave the way for a bright and peaceful future.

The Commission's aim was, therefore, to institutionalize forgiveness (Burying South Africa's past, 1997). Within this context, a full disclosure of crimes committed was regarded as a precondition for forgiveness to take place (Omar: cited in Van der Walt & Van der Walt, 1996, p.3). The TRC provided an institutional structure for forgiveness and reconciliation. But what does it mean personally to say 'I forgive you'? This question is the focus of this thesis. It seeks to clarify how forgiveness is subjectively experienced and to elucidate the process that accompanies this subjective experience.

1. Motivation for the study

The dismantling of Apartheid and the birth of a new democratically elected government signified the dawning of a new era in the history of South Africa. A further milestone was the creation of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, which aimed to provide South African society with a platform on which a healing process could be facilitated by dealing with the past in a fashion that is just and morally acceptable. The TRC was based on the assumption that the truth is a necessary precondition for forgiveness, and that the full disclosure of the truth, although painful, would be cathartic and ultimately lead to national reconciliation. Within this context, the TRC found itself in an arduous position. It had to convince those responsible for human rights abuses to come forward and disclose the truth, while simultaneously bringing across to victims and survivors of human rights abuses, the essentiality of forgiving if true healing, both at a micro (individual) and macro (societal) level, was to be attained. Although some of those who testified expressed a willingness to grant forgiveness, many victims and survivors seem to be filled with anger and bitterness, and consequently find themselves unable to forgive. The right of these individuals to respond with anger and hold other negative emotions towards those who have caused them psychological or physical harm is not denied, nor is their pain and suffering trivialized. It is, however, important to realize that the treatment and management of anger is essential for both the emotional well being of the individual and the good of society. Forgiveness as a therapeutic technique has been put forward as one of the most effective methods to deal with anger (Fitzgibbons, 1986).

Based on all of the above, it is assumed that there is a lack of understanding of the therapeutic powers of forgiveness, not only within in a personal context, but also within a societal context.

This stimulated the researcher to embark on the current research project. It is hoped that an

investigation into the structure and process of forgiveness at an individual psychological level will shed light on how one can be healed through it. The underlying assumption of the thesis is, thus, that forgiving can ultimately contribute to one's mental well being by enabling one to confront one's pain and live a fulfilling life, while at the same time bring about national unity and reconciliation.

2. Conceptual framework for the study

The study is embedded in an interpretative approach to understanding the process and structural dynamics inherent in the subjective experience of forgiveness following gross human rights violations.

2.1. An interpretive paradigm

An interpretive paradigm underpins the meta-theoretical framework for the study. Interpretive theory is related to hermeneutics, a theory of meaning that originated in the nineteenth century. Hermeneutics emphasize that human behaviour is purposive, active and goal-directed (Schwandt, 1994), and that the interpretive inquiry takes place in a context delineated by our everyday participatory understanding of people and events (Van Vlaenderen, 1997). According to Denzin (1996), interpretive social scientists study real-life experiences of real people in order to uncover how these people give meaning to their real-life experiences. Aside from its practical relevance, the utilization of this methodology can be justified for several reasons:

- It assumes that the researcher approaches the research topic with a certain fore-structure, while at the same time the emphasis of the inquiry is to enhance our understanding of both the structure and the process by which forgiveness takes place.

- The multi-layeredness of the interpretive process allows for surplus meaning of forgiveness to be uncovered.

2.2. The research question

In order to gain an understanding of the subjective experience of forgiveness of victims and survivors of gross human rights abuses within the context of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, the following goals were regarded as pivotal:

- to gain an in-depth understanding into the structure of forgiveness;
- to explicate the process by which forgiveness is subjectively experienced, and;
- to determine whether there is any relation between the structure and process of forgiveness experienced by the participants.

2.3. The method

The study was conducted by means of the interpretative paradigm. A qualitative interview, the transcribed texts of which constitute the unit of analysis, was conducted with each participant. Interview data was analyzed by the application of a reading guide to the texts (Mergendollar, 1989). Ricoeur (1976) emphasizes the notion of the text, which he defines as discourse fixed by the written language, as the focus of the interpretation process. The choice of method was motivated by its compatibility with the research question, which has as its focus, real people and their real life experiences.

3. The study process

The study starts with a discussion of the socio-historical context in which it is situated. Attention is given to the socio-political nature of South Africa during Apartheid as well as during the transition to democracy. This is followed by a detailed delineation of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission with specific reference to its components, i.e., its aims and objections, functions, how the commission was constituted, concerns and objections lodged against its establishment, as well as its structures and support structures.

Chapter 3 focuses on the theoretical context in which the study is grounded. It starts with a clarification of definitional complexities around forgiveness. Attention is also given to the relationship between forgiveness and related concepts in which definitions of forgiveness are frequently embedded such as reconciliation, Christianity and morality. This is followed by an outline of the therapeutic value of forgiveness as well as the various objections that have frequently been raised against the granting of forgiveness. After this, a delineation of the structure and process of forgiveness will follow.

Chapter 4 consists of a discussion of the meta-theoretical framework in which the study is embedded. This include a discussion of interpretive social science and hermeneutics, as well as an outline of the various components inherent in the interpretive philosophy of science, followed by the various dimensions of such a philosophy of science, i.e., the ontological, epistemological, teleological and methodological dimensions.

Chapter 5 focuses on the empirical study. An outline of the aims of the study precedes that of the key terms that are utilized in the study. This is followed by an explanation of the sampling

procedures, the selection criteria that was applied, as well as a profile of the five participants. An overview of the research design is then sketched followed by a detailed outline of all the phases, stages and steps in the research design. Following this, some of the ethical issues that were encountered in the study, will be discussed.

The results of the study are discussed in chapters 6, 7 and 8. This includes the contextualisation of the results with existing literature. The study is then concluded in Chapter 9.

CHAPTER 2.

SOCIO-HISTORICAL CONTEXT OF THE STUDY

1. Introduction

As indicated in the preceding chapter, this study is aimed at explicating the process and structure of the subjective experience of forgiveness following gross human rights violations. The emphasis here falls on forgiveness that is related to specific acts that were committed within a specific context, i.e. acts of gross human rights violations within a political context. It, therefore, becomes imperative to provide an outline of the socio-historical context in which these acts took place in order to enhance one's understanding of the forgiveness experienced by the victims and survivors of these acts. This will also serve the purpose of demonstrating how this context firstly, created the conditions that facilitated the commitment of acts of gross human rights violations. And secondly, how it also produced conditions that would facilitate a truth recovery process aimed at healing the wounds of the past with the express intent of bringing about national reconciliation through forgiveness.

In analyzing the above-mentioned trends, a three-stage development process, (i.e., Grand Apartheid, Reformed Apartheid and the Transition to Democracy) similar to the one proposed by Lotter (1997), will be applied. It needs to be added that, of paramount importance, is only to give the reader an idea of the nature of the circumstances surrounding acts that were committed during the periods in question and not to provide an exhaustive account of the socio-political trends that characterized our country's historical development.

This will be followed by an outline of the legislative and parliamentary processes that culminated in the establishment of the TRC and how, on the basis of these processes, the TRC can be distinguished from truth commissions in other countries. Attempts will then be made to show how the TRC provided an institutional framework within which forgiveness could be facilitated in order to bring about national unity and reconciliation. In this section, the attention will focus on the specific components of the TRC, i.e., its aims and objectives, functions, how the commission was constituted, concerns and objections lodged against its establishment, as well as its structures and support structures.

2. South Africa under Apartheid

2.1. Grand Apartheid (1948-1983)

The 28th May 1948 proved to be a turning point in the history of South Africa. On this day, the Reunified National Party (RNP) defeated the United Party (UP) in the general elections. The 'Reunified' part was later dropped and the party became known as the National Party (NP), the same party that was defeated by the African National Congress (ANC) in the first democratic elections ever held in South Africa (Du Pre, 1992). The party's leader, D.F. Malan, wasted no time in implementing its grand scheme of Apartheid, which was aimed at entrenching white supremacy and ensuring racial purification. This would eventually become a system, which its supporters will defend at the cost of violating every conceivable moral constraint on state use of force against its citizens (Lotter, 1997). Apartheid was based on the total commitment of securing rights, benefits and privileges for whites at the expense of black people through many forms of domination, exploitation and oppression. By mentioning this, it is not suggested that blacks did not suffer prior to 1948, but rather that domination, exploitation and oppression was

intensified after 1948. This intensification was made possible through the legalization of Apartheid by means of various forms of legislation. Examples of these were: The Prohibition of Mixed Marriages Act of 1949, The Immorality Act No. 21 of 1950, The Group Areas Act No. 41 of 1950 and The Suppression of Communism Amendment Act No. 50 of 1950 (Dalton, Abrahams, de Villiers & de Villiers, 1997).

Participation in the governing bodies of society was reserved for whites by taking away the little political power that blacks had before 1948. Labour and resources of blacks were used without adequate compensation. This economic exploitation was made possible due to limitations placed on education, work opportunities and collective bargaining power (Lotter, 1997). Whites, on the other hand, had unlimited access to better job and education opportunities, as well as the privileges that accompanied these (Lodge, 1990). For this reason Adam and Moodley referred to Apartheid as “a state-sponsored enrichment of whites and a state-enforced economic limitations on blacks” (1993, p.31). And as if political domination and economic exploitation were not enough, black people in South Africa suffered comprehensive social oppression through practices of social exclusion, marginalization and cultural imperialism (Lotter, 1997).

From the outset, blacks responded with fierce resistance. Initially, this was of a peaceful non-violent nature in the form of the Defiance Campaign under the leadership of the African National Congress Youth League (ANCYL) in the early 1950's. The campaign was based on civil disobedience with the aim of getting arrested. This resulted in organizations and individuals being banned or arrested and protests being outlawed. During the 1960's, a new form of resistance, which was mainly of a psychological nature, emerged. Inspired by the civil rights movement in the United States and the rise of African Nationalism in colonial Africa, the Black Consciousness Movement (BCM) was born. This movement was geared towards restoring black

people's self-respect and dignity, which were so severely damaged as a result of the National Party's Apartheid policy. By imbuing a new sense of appreciation of their blackness, the BCM provided the necessary catalyst that would eventually lead to the resurrection of African Nationalism among black South Africans (Meli, 1988). Armed with a renewed sense of pride and self-respect, resistance intensified, culminating in the Soweto uprising in 1976.

After peacefully protesting against the introduction of Afrikaans as the medium of instruction in their schools, several unarmed school children were killed and many more wounded when the police fired on them. This event led to national uprisings. The National Party (NP) government intensified its use of excessive violence and force as measures to contain protest actions. This was to become a common feature of the party's rule. Leaders of the resistance movements were banned or detained indefinitely without trial. The majority was tortured, while many were killed (details of these would later emerge at the hearings of the TRC). Severe restrictions were placed on people's basic freedoms of movement and association. During this time, international support in the fight against racial injustices in South Africa increased. Through campaigns in foreign countries, economic sanctions, cultural, and sports boycotts, the international community demonstrated its total rejection of Apartheid. All this increased black South Africa's commitment toward eradicating Apartheid. It forced the National Party to rethink and eventually reform its policies. This led to the tricameral system, which was introduced in 1984.

2.2. Reformed Apartheid (1984-1990)

Reformed Apartheid was introduced with the inauguration of the controversial tricameral parliament system in September 1984 (Du Pre, 1992). Participation in the system was based on racial terms. Consequently, only white, coloured and Indian people were allowed to participate in

the system, while geographically defined ethnically homogeneous homelands were created for blacks (Meli, 1988). The main motive behind this was the government's desire to maintain political domination while at the same time giving others say over their own affairs, but within the framework and limits determined by white people (Lotter, 1997).

Reformed Apartheid was also characterized by the increased militarization of the state, demonstrated by Prime Minister P.W. Botha's (previously Minister of Defense) commitment towards a total military strategy against a total onslaught (Mulholland, 1997) from what, according to Du Pre (1992), was perceived to be a Marxist-orientated *Swartgevaar*. What was, therefore, black people's legitimate resistance against comprehensive oppression by the Apartheid state, was redefined into a total onslaught of communist forces against South Africa (Lotter, 1997). This was made possible by the Marxist discourse of the ANC and other resistance organizations, as well as the dual membership of resistance leaders in the ANC and SACP and the support these organizations received from communist countries.

During this era, resistance assumed an unprecedented scale. It started with mass political mobilization of black people as well as coloured and Indian people who were opposed to the tricameral system. The result of this political mobilization was twofold. It gave birth to the United Democratic Front (UDF), which was built on the values of the ANC and embodied the Freedom Charter and in the process allowed for people of all races to participate in the struggle for freedom (Lodge, 1990). It also gave rise to the National Forum which, by virtue of its commitment to Africanism of the Black Consciousness tradition, prohibited white people from participating in the liberation struggle (Meli, 1988). The ideological differences between these two groups would eventually have violent consequences as well.

Resistance initially took the form of peaceful marches and protest gatherings, followed by consumer boycotts, labour strikes and school and university boycotts. These non-violent means of protesting, however, frequently turned violent due to the leadership's inability to exercise effective control over protesters. Those who did not support labour and consumer boycotts were frequently victimized. They were also regarded as traitors and were often dealt with brutally. Many who were found guilty by people's courts paid with their lives, with the most horrific method of punishment being the 'necklace method'. This involved placing a tire around a person's neck, dousing it with fuel and setting it alight (Lotter, 1997). With the help of the military wing of the ANC (*Umkonto we Sizwe* –The spear of the nation) and the military wing of the Pan Africanist Congress (PAC) (*Poqo* – which means pure) military and industrial targets were also sabotaged. For the PAC, whites could not be regarded as Africans and thus loyal to the African cause because they were benefiting from the existing social order (Thompson, 1990). Later, in June 1985, the ANC would drop the distinction between soft and hard targets (Lotter, 1997). Attacks were now directed towards any person, organization, or institution, which supported Apartheid structures. The country was infiltrated in order to recruit people into the military wings and provide them with training (both locally and internationally) with the aim of carrying out attacks on identified targets.

What followed was the implementation of a comprehensive strategy to counter the resistance against Apartheid. Banning orders were placed on anyone or anything that was perceived to be promoting resistance. These included people, organizations and publications. In order to enforce these bans, security forces carried out raids on houses and buildings which belonged to political activists or which were suspected of harbouring wanted people or hiding illegal publications. Restrictions, placed on newspapers that were sympathetic to the cause of the resistance movements or the plight of black people in general, meant that the Apartheid propaganda

machinery could function with little interference. Detention without trial, made possible by a state of emergency, became common. Detainees died as a result of the assaults and tortures they endured, while others disappeared.

The state security forces, including black police officers and other state agents developed a reputation for the excessive use of violence against black people. They were also implicated in facilitating black-on-black violence by supporting Inkatha (later known as the Inkatha Freedom Party-IFP) first against the United Democratic Front (UDF), which led the resistance against Apartheid in the absence of the banned ANC, and later the ANC, after its unbanning. These clashes, which are ongoing, are a result of two groups that were both opposed to Apartheid, but were committed to different ways of dealing with the situation. In these clashes and other police inspired attacks, countless people lost their lives. And as if internal repression of resistance was not enough, military attacks were launched against exiled ANC members in neighbouring countries as well as abroad, thus sending a clear signal of the state's willingness to disregard the territorial integrity of these countries in defense of Apartheid (Giliomee, 1986).

2.3. Transition to Democracy

The landmark speech of President F.W. De Klerk who succeeded P.W. Botha in late 1989, signified South Africa's first step towards democracy. By this time violence that engulfed the country, had taken its toll. People's lives were destroyed, and the economy, as well as the infrastructure was severely damaged. It became apparent that a change of tactics was necessary. White people gradually came to realize that Apartheid was morally unacceptable and blacks became more confident and militant in demanding their rights (Lotter, 1997). These were some of the issues that prompted President De Klerk to make a speech on the 2nd of February 1990 in

which he announced the unbanning of political organizations and the release from prison of political prisoners, as well as measures that will lead to the dismantling of Apartheid.

The new political liberties meant that black people could mobilize and protest on an unprecedented scale. Violence, however, persisted during this time to gain support and to recruit members. This was a result of the militaristic rhetoric of the 80's, which continued after De Klerk's speech (Adam & Moodley, 1993). Lotter (1997), on the other hand, asserts that these trends were due to the fact that blacks found it problematic to learn instantaneously the rules of the new political game because of the difficulties encountered when trying to change behavioral patterns nurtured over years. This is possibly the same reason why conservative whites experienced difficulty in viewing blacks as equals and were, thus, motivated to commit acts of political violence. Furthermore, those who were taught to believe in the legitimacy of Apartheid and to defend it at whatever cost were expected to change overnight. The police were expected to redefine their role and move away from executing their duties in favor of those supporting Apartheid structures. They had to respond to marches and protests in ways to which they were not accustomed. All of these were extremely difficult to achieve and made some people feel that continued attacks on the police were justified (Lotter, 1997).

The slow pace of the negotiations and dialogue subsequent to the speech further frustrated people. Although their political situation changed, their economic and social status remained unaltered, thus causing more violence. These unfavourable circumstances also stimulated criminal activity. A further contributing factor was the racist attitudes of those on the far left of the political spectrum who rejected white people as not being part of Africa, and in this way justified their indiscriminate attacks on whites. This ultimately resulted in retaliatory attacks on

blacks. "Violence, therefore, became self-perpetuating and developed a dynamic of its own" (Lotter, 1997, p101).

Despite the widespread violence, many were convinced by resolving conflicts through dialogue and negotiation. This can be ascribed to leaders' commitment towards negotiating a peaceful settlement. Possible destabilizing events such as the assassination of Chris Hani, a leading figure within the ANC and SACP, failed to derail the constitutional negotiations. Negotiations produced a constitution, which further resulted in the first democratically held elections in April 1994 in which all South Africans participated. This election, which was won by the ANC, was probably the most historic event in South Africa. After decades of oppression, domination and exploitation, the human dignity and worth of black people was recognized. What was remarkable was that most black people magnanimously forgave white people for the painful past and saw the opportunity for building a new society on a different, democratic foundation, where there would be room for everyone. Reconciliation was a strong priority. This was demonstrated by the ANC's decision to opt for a partnership government, aptly named the Government of National Unity (GNU) to steer the country into the future. It was also realized that the past should be properly dealt with in order for genuine reconciliation to materialize. It was a steadfast commitment to this ideal that led to the establishment of the TRC.

3. The Truth and Reconciliation Commission

When the new South Africa was born, the question many asked was 'How do we deal with the past?' Do we forget about all the unhappiness and turn a new page, as had been urged by F.W. De Klerk and others on countless occasions (Boraine, Levy & Scheffer, 1994), or do we confront it and acknowledge the pain and suffering of those who suffered as a result of past injustices?

The creation of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) was a clear signal that the GNU was committed to the latter. Thus, as a result of a protracted process of both intra- and extra-parliamentary discussion and debate, The Promotion of National Unity and Reconciliation Act No. 34 (1995) was passed on the 19th of May 1995. This Act made provision for the establishment of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, which provided the South African society with a platform on which the past could be confronted in a manner that is just and morally acceptable, and that will ultimately enable us to build our new democracy.

3.1. Why face the Past?

To disregard the past during transition periods in countries where there were great repression, can be disastrous. Not only does this course of action neutralize any attempts at healing both the individual and the society at large. It also predisposes a nation that makes itself guilty of this type of denial, to endless conflict. The Croat and Serbian conflict bears testament to this. From a psychological point of view, it is assumed that past hurts do not simply disappear with the passage of time. It needs to be dealt with adequately. The assumption was that the TRC might contribute significantly towards accomplishing this. This view is endorsed by Hamber (1996), when he argues that giving testimony can facilitate the healing process by building a context of meaning for the survivors, allowing them to feel heard for the first time and acknowledging the enormity of impact of the events on their lives.

According to Neier (1994), there are three crucial reasons for confronting the past. Firstly, as a civilized society we must recognize the worth and dignity of those who have suffered as a result of past injustice, as failure to do this could perpetuate their victimization. Secondly, it is important to send a clear message that those who were guilty of human rights abuses are not

above the law. And thirdly, it is necessary to prevent the occurrence of future abuses. Zalaquett refers to this as 'moral reconstruction' which he defines as "putting back into place the moral order that has broken down or has been severely undermined, or to build a just political order where none has existed..." (1994, p.9). This can be accomplished through forgiveness and reconciliation. These processes necessitate a full disclosure of wrong doings, acceptance of responsibility by the perpetrators and a resolve not to do it again. It entails building a human rights' culture and setting into place values, institutions and policies that will prevent the repetition of past injustices.

3.2. Comparison between the TRC and the experiences in other countries

The method that South Africa chose to deal with the past differs in several respects from that chosen by other countries such as Germany and Chile. According to van Zyl (1997), these differences are related to the different ways in which each of these countries made a transition from an autocracy to a democracy. In Germany, democracy was restored after the Second World War. The toppling of Nazi Germany meant that the Allied Forces could impose justice on those who were responsible for human rights violations with no opposition. They were able to dictate how the past were to be dealt with, and chose a method that was primarily based on revenge, not because they thought it was right, but because they were able to exact it.

When Chilean dictator, General Pinochet, restored power to a civilian government, he still commanded enough power to ensure that he remained in office as head of the armed forces (van Zyl, 1997). He was then able to use this influence to prevent the new government from prosecuting those responsible for abuses that were committed under his rule. It is, however, interesting to note that recent developments suggest that General Pinochet might still be

prosecuted for human rights abuses. He was recently arrested in Britain in relation to charges brought against him by victims of human rights violations. Notwithstanding this latest development, both Germany and Chile experienced an imbalance in power during their transitional phases. This resulted in mass prosecutions in Germany because those in power wanted to deal with the past, and blanket amnesties in Chile because those in power were committed to the denial of past injustices (van Zyl, 1997).

The creation of the TRC was inextricably linked to South Africa's transition to democracy (van Zyl, 1997). This was achieved through negotiations, thereby resulting in an even balance of power. The ongoing conflict forced leaders to acknowledge that long lasting peace was only possible through negotiations. The even balance of power meant that one side could protect themselves against indiscriminate prosecutions based on revenge, while the other could prevent the granting of blanket amnesties based on a desire to forget the past (van Zyl, 1997). As mentioned previously, this occurred as a result of rigorous negotiations both inside and outside parliament, resulting in an mechanism that would enable us to deal with the past in a just and morally acceptable manner that would further consolidate our democracy. The TRC was about human rights. Its work was not guided by a need to seek revenge, but by a desire to understand the events of the past with the aim of bringing about national unity and reconciliation (Truth and Reconciliation Commission, 1995).

3.3. Objections against the TRC

It was perhaps inevitable that severe criticisms from both sides of the political spectrum were lodged against the establishment of the TRC. Those on the left were suspicious about the ability of the TRC to address their deeply held grievances against those who were responsible for the

torture, death and disappearances of their loved ones. The TRC was further accused of promoting religious idealism at the expense of addressing real issues that could help form a firm basis for a reconciled nation (Mapazi, 1997). The fear, therefore, was that the TRC would not do enough. The PAC, on the other hand, argued that forcing those who committed acts in the interest of the liberation struggle, to share a platform with those who defended Apartheid, amounted to a criminalization of the war for liberation.

Those on the right feared that the TRC would do too much. The NP especially warned against a witch-hunt (Van der Walt, 1996) while others questioned the cut-off dates. Despite these objections, it was, however, important to realize that the TRC would have limitations and thus, for people not to have unrealistic expectations. For this reason Hamber reminded us that "...the TRC needs to be viewed as one of the mechanisms for addressing the conflicts of the past. However, it needs to be borne in mind that it is an artificially constructed phenomenon which will be profoundly different from individualized and personalized ways of coping with adversity" (1996, p.3).

3.4. The functions and structure of the TRC

3.4.1. Aims and objectives

The ultimate aim of the TRC is to assist in the development of a sustainable culture of human rights so as to prevent a repeat of past injustices. In terms of the Promotion of National Unity and Reconciliation Act No. 34 (1995, p.6), the Commission has as its objectives, the promotion of national unity and reconciliation in a spirit of understanding, which transcends the conflicts and divisions of the past by:

- establishing as complete a picture as possible of the causes, nature and extent of the gross violations of human rights which were committed from 1 March 1960 to the cut-off date including the antecedents, circumstances, factors and context of such violations, as well as the perspectives of victims and the motives and perspectives of the perpetrators of gross human rights violations, by conducting investigations and holding hearings;
- facilitating the granting of amnesty to individuals who make full disclosure of all the relevant facts relating to acts associated with a political objective and which comply with the requirements of the above-mentioned Act;
- establishing and making known the fate or whereabouts of victims and restoring the human and civil dignity of such victims by granting them an opportunity to relate their own accounts of the violations of which they are victims, and to recommend reparation measures in respect of them;
- compiling a report providing as comprehensive an account as possible of the activities and findings of the Commission and containing recommendations of measures to prevent future violations of human rights.

3.4.2. Functions

In order to achieve its aims and objectives, in terms of the Promotion of National Unity and Reconciliation Act No. 34 (1995, p.8), it is, therefore, the Commission's functions to:

- facilitate, initiate or coordinate, inquiries into gross human rights violations, the nature, causes and extent of these violations, the identities of all individuals, authorities, institutions and organizations involved in such violations;

- investigate whether such violations were the result of deliberate planning on the part of the State or former state or any of their organs, or of any political organization, liberation movement or group or individual, and to assess accountability for such violations;
- facilitate, initiate or coordinate the gathering of information and the receiving of evidence from any person claiming to be victims of gross human rights violations or representatives of such victims, which establish the identity of victims, the fate or current whereabouts and the nature and extent the harm suffered by such victims;
- facilitate and promote the granting of amnesty in relation to relevant guidelines as set out in the Act, by receiving amnesty applications from those desiring to make a full disclosure of all the relevant facts relating to acts of gross human rights violations;
- determine what articles have been destroyed by any person in order to conceal violations of human rights or acts associated with a political objective;
- prepare a comprehensive report which sets out the Commission's activities and findings, based on factual and objective information and evidence collected or received by it or placed at its disposal;
- make recommendations to the President with regard to policy that will guide the granting of reparation to victims or the taking of other measures aimed at rehabilitating and restoring the human and civil dignity of victims;
- make recommendations to the Minister with regard to the development of a limited witness protection programme for the purpose of the Act;
- make recommendations to the President with regard to the creation of institutions conducive to a stable and fair society and the institutional, administrative and legislative measures which should be taken or introduced in order to prevent the commission of human rights abuses.

3.4.3. Structure

In order to enhance its efficiency and maximize its capacity for achieving its aims and objectives as set out in section 3.4.1, the Commission consists of three sub-committees, each of which will have the responsibility of focussing on one of the said objectives. To assist the committees in the execution of their duties, an Investigative Unit was to be established with the specific aim of verifying the statements of witnesses, victims and individuals that apply for amnesty. To further enhance their ability to execute their duties successfully, each committee will make information in its possession available to other committees.

- **The Committee on Human Rights Violations**

This Committee afforded people who have suffered gross human rights violations the opportunity to tell their stories on the condition that the violations must have been serious and committed within a political context between 1 March 1960 and 5 December 1993. The committee's task was to investigate, record and make known gross human rights violations that have been committed, to determine who was responsible for the violations and how and why these violations occurred (Promotion of National Unity and Reconciliation Act, No. 34, 1995).

- **The Committee on Amnesty**

This Committee's task was to ensure that the TRC meets its second objective by considering amnesty for those individuals who committed crimes or gross human rights violations for political reasons. To qualify for amnesty, people who have committed these acts or crimes must have applied to the Commission before 14 December 1996 and should have given a complete

disclosure of what, why and against whom these crimes or acts were committed. It was then the task of the committee to review their amnesty application. The Committee did not grant amnesty to anyone whose actions were motivated by personal gain or hatred. In terms of the Promotion of National Unity and Reconciliation Act, No. 34 (1995), the granting of amnesty was based on the following criteria:

- whether the act or crime was committed for a political reason or as part of a political uprising or event, or whether it was a reaction to one of these;
- what were the acts or crimes they committed, why they committed these, and the severity of these acts or crimes;
- whether these were aimed at a political opponent; and
- whether they acted under the orders of their organizations or whether their organizations agreed with their acts.

- **The Committee on Reparation and Rehabilitation**

The establishment of this Committee was motivated by the desire to achieve the third objective of the TRC as set out in section 4.4.1. Based on information it received about victims and survivors from the two previous Committees, this committee made policy recommendations to the President for appropriate reparation and rehabilitation. The Committee further recognized that there were cases where gross violations directly caused a situation that cannot wait until the Commission had completed its work. To assist these people, the Committee on Reparation and Rehabilitation recommended that interim reparation be granted to those who qualified. The Commission focussed on victims and survivors of gross human rights abuses which were committed within a political context between 1 March 1960 and 5 December 1993. In terms of

the Promotion of National Unity and Reconciliation Act No. 34, the Committee, therefore, had the following tasks:

- to determine the nature and extent of the harm suffered by victims of gross human rights abuses and what effects this had on the survivors;
- to provide emotional support services to victims and witnesses before, during and after hearings;
- to consult communities and individuals about the impact of violations on their lives and possible ways of achieving reparation and rehabilitation; and
- to make recommendations to the President and Parliament for urgent assistance in cases where immediate relief is needed.

- **Support Structures**

Although the TRC functioned as an independent institution and had full-time staff, it was also recognized that it would need all the assistance it can obtain, especially from voluntary organizations, in order to enhance, broaden and strengthen its work. For this reason the fullest cooperation from non-governmental organizations (NGO's) was to be sought. These include human rights organizations, psychological and social support service organizations and religious organizations, all of which had an outstanding track record, and thus had the potential to complement the work of the Commission. These organizations had been especially instrumental in putting victims and survivors of gross human rights abuses in touch with the TRC (Truth and Reconciliation Commission, 1995).

4. Conclusion

The potential of the TRC to contribute to forgiveness and reconciliation was aptly demonstrated by the case of one Mahlomola Isaac Tlale, which appeared in Truth Talk in 1997. Mr. Tlale was 83 years old when he testified at the TRC hearing in Alexandra, Johannesburg, on 28 October 1996. He testified that in 1963 he was detained in Alexandra and taken to Pretoria where he was interrogated and severely tortured. He was charged with sabotage and sentenced to twelve years on Robben Island.

A priest later told how Mr. Tlale had once told him that he was a very bitter man. He said, "If I were to die today and went to heaven, I would tell God that I'm in the wrong place, perhaps I belong in hell" (The veteran who told his story and died in peace, 1997, p.6). After testifying at the TRC, Mr. Tlale was a changed man. He went back to the priest and said that he could now forgive and reconcile because he was now at peace. Mr. Tlale died peacefully on 31 December 1996, barely two months after his testimony. The priest told the story at his funeral.

It is not argued that the TRC would have the same result for all those victims and survivors who testified. It has already been stated that the Commission inevitably had shortcomings. Those who testified also had varying expectations ranging from the need to determine the truth to more material ones such as compensation. It would thus, have been impossible for the Commission to satisfy everyone who testified. In order to understand its true potential and appreciate its successes, the work of the TRC should be seen within the context of the limitations and shortcomings in which it had to operate. It is important to regard the TRC as the beginning of a process, which will continue after the commission's tenure.

CHAPTER 3.

THEORETICAL CONTEXT

1. Introduction

The birth of a new democratic government and the accompanying challenge of dealing with the painful legacy of Apartheid, provided psychology as an academic discipline with opportunities to assist in determining the healthiest way of dealing with past injustices. To this extend issues such as reconciliation, guilt, confession, responsibility and restitution have received a considerable amount of attention, albeit predominantly from theologians (Van der Walt 1996). "All these matters are important and should be addressed, but it cannot be done without first dealing with the most important issue of forgiveness (Lotter, 1996, p.2) as forgiveness can significantly contribute to solving conflict in politics (Shriver, 1995).

Because forgiveness serves to change the significance of deeds of the past, it is evident that it has personal and social implications (Row, Halling, Davies, Leifer, Powers & van Bronkhorst, 1989). Halling (1979) asserts that it is possible that failure to forgive, not only other people, but ourselves as well, stands in the way of our development as persons who are free of unnecessary restraints from the past and illusion of human perfection. Furthermore, the social implications of the notion of forgiveness has been most aptly demonstrated by Martin Luther King Jnr. in the United States (Row, et al, 1989) and probably President Nelson Mandela in South Africa who tirelessly reminds us of the futility and self-destructive nature of anger and vengeance (Burying South Africa's past: of memory and forgiveness, 1997). According to Lotter, "...forgiveness must be sought by all, since without it, no reconciliation of any kind is possible and any

unforgiving society will fall into total anarchy" (1996, p.9). Although this statement is debatable, it is nonetheless worth exploring in the light of the risks posed by non-forgiveness.

For these reasons, forgiveness as a topic merits psychological study. Major personality theories, however, have not been concerned with the process of forgiveness (Fow, 1996) and until recently, the construct of forgiveness has remained virtually unexplored (Enright & Human Development Study Group, 1994). It is, therefore, difficult to comprehend why psychology, as an academic discipline has chosen to treat forgiveness with benign neglect, in spite of its human importance (Row et al, 1989). Arendt (1958) provides a tentative explanation for this trend by stating that forgiveness has its origins in a specifically religious context. Thus, it could be argued that, perhaps psychologists assume that this issue is well taken care of by theologians. This is not an unreasonable assertion, if we consider the centrality of forgiveness in the Judeo-Christian tradition. Giorgi (1970) provides a more insightful explanation, which, as a philosophical motivation, is implicit in the present study. He states that psychology, insofar as it has been conceptualized as a natural science, has placed priority on its method, that is, the experimental method. It has thus not concerned itself with phenomena which are not compatible with this method. As a topic, forgiveness clearly falls into this category.

On a more encouraging note, Row et al., (1989) point out that there is evidence that psychology is moving away from its identification with the empiricist method towards an interpretive or hermeneutical approach to the study of human conduct. They place themselves within this tradition and regard it as the most effective method by which the meaning and content of forgiveness can be explored. In addition to this, Fow (1996) has also explored the structure and process of forgiveness from a phenomenological perspective. He motivates this by arguing that unlike the natural scientific method, which lacks a fundamental understanding of the process of

forgiveness. phenomenological methodology provides detailed in-depth descriptions of forgiveness as a psychological phenomenon.

According to McCullough, Worthington Jnr, & Rachal (1997), the last few years have witnessed a marked increase in psychological scholarship on forgiveness, especially from the development and clinical perspectives (see DiBlasio, 1998; Enright, Gassin & Wu, 1992; Enright & Human Development Study Group, 1994; Fitzgibbons, 1986; Hebl & Enright, 1993; Hope, 1987; McCullough et al., 1997; Pollard, Anderson, Anderson & Jennings, 1998; Sells & Hargrave, 1998; Walrond-Skinn, 1998; Worthington Jnr., 1998). From a clinical point of view, scholarship on the use of forgiveness in family therapy has especially received much attention, to the extent that an entire journal was recently devoted to it (*Journal of Family Therapy*, 1998, 20). An overview of the literature, however, suggests that psychological studies that have been conducted on forgiveness remain largely inadequate. While they contain significant insights, they still lack psychological concreteness, and although they often make clarifying distinctions, few of them actually give an indication of what forgiveness is, as opposed to what it is not (Sells & Hargrave, 1998). Row et al further state that "...they do not provide a coherent sense of the phenomenon as a whole" (1989, p.235). Research in this field, therefore, lacks a clear delineation of the meanings of forgiveness.

This chapter is aimed at providing the theoretical framework that underpins the present study. A relevant point of departure will be to address some of the definitional complexities that usually accompany discussions about forgiveness, and then adopt a definition that will be appropriate for the study. In order to elucidate this, a further elaboration will be provided of the relationship between forgiveness and the various concepts in which various definitions of forgiveness are embedded. Following this, the relevance of psychotherapy in aiding the forgiveness process will

be discussed after which attention will be given to the various criticisms that have been lodged against the granting of forgiveness. Finally, an explication of the structure and process of forgiveness will be provided.

2. Definition

Defining forgiveness seems to be one of the major points of contest among those who express scientific interest in the phenomenon. The vagueness of definitions (Hebl & Enright, 1993) as well as the diverse and conflicting conceptualizations of what forgiveness is bears testament to this. The most common understanding of forgiveness involves some aspect of letting go over time (Sells & Hargrave, 1998). This release may focus on issues such as anger (Fitzgibbons, 1986), and resentment (Enright & the Human Development Study Group, 1994; North, 1987; Richards, 1988). Forgiveness as an unfolding process that takes time, is emphasized most by Enright & the Human Development Study Group (1994), Fitzgibbons (1986) and Hope (1987). Enright and the Human Development Study Group (1994), Hebl and Enright (1993), North (1987) and Twambley (1976) further connects forgiveness to the idea of mercy, while McCullough et al (1997) link forgiveness to increased empathy for the offender.

2.1 Christian definitions

Many definitions embed forgiveness in Christian ethics (e.g. Emerson, 1965; Patton, 1985; Taylor, 1946 and Mackintosh, 1944). According to Taylor, forgiveness...“implies a personal relationship (with God), violated, and now restored” (1946, p.1). Thus, an unwillingness to forgive means a breakdown in one’s fellowship with God. This implies that a person who is not at peace with himself or with his fellow man, is not at peace with God (Emerson, 1965). Within

the context of the TRC, this view gains added impetus due to the fact that Archbishop Desmond Tutu, a world-renowned human rights activist and Anglican clergyman, is the Chairperson of the TRC. However, by basing forgiveness on purely Biblical principles and by placing emphasis on the relationship between the forgiver and God, such definitions preclude those who are not followers of the Christian faith from being able to forgive.

2.2. Interpersonal definitions

Less spiritual definitions base forgiveness on the re-establishment of a relationship that existed between the forgiver and the forgiven prior to the act for which forgiveness is to be granted (McCullough et al., 1997; Pattison, 1965). Pattison, for example, defines forgiveness as the “complete act of reconciliation of the guilty one with the offended one” (1965, p. 107). Similarly, McCullough et al., (1997) defines forgiveness as the set of motivational changes whereby one becomes (a) decreasingly motivated to retaliate against an offending relationship partner, (b) decreasingly motivated to maintain estrangement from the offender, and (c) increasingly motivated by conciliation and goodwill for the offender, despite the offender’s harmful actions. Thus implying that a relationship existed between offender and victim prior to the harmful act being committed. This conceptualization may be useful for understanding forgiveness in relation to close relationships. It may, however, be problematic for acts where the victim, prior to the act having taken place, may not have known the perpetrator.

Smith (1997) is especially critical towards the interpersonal definition and warns against confining forgiveness to decisions about relationship. She argues that it is possible to forgive someone even when you did not have a relationship with that person prior to the act for which

forgiveness is to be granted. In the case where there was a relationship, it is also possible to forgive someone without resuming the relationship.

2.3. Adopting a suitable definition for the study

A definition that may be useful in understanding forgiveness to be granted for acts where there was no relationship between the forgiver and the forgiven prior to the act for which forgiveness is granted, would be that of North (1987). This definition seems to be the most acceptable and is recognized as such by a number of researchers (Sells & Hargrave, 1998; Human Development Study Group, 1991; Lewis, 1980; Hebl & Enright, 1993; Enright et al., 1992). A possible explanation for this is because North's conceptualization of forgiveness is more inclusive than most existing definitions as it transcends the various philosophical disagreements between the various disciplines that have concerned itself with scientific scholarship in the field.

North defines forgiveness as the overcoming of negative affect and judgement toward the offender, not by denying oneself the right to such affect and judgement, but by endeavoring to view the offender with compassion, benevolence, and love, while recognizing that he or she has abandoned the right to them. In terms of this definition, forgiveness involves three levels of functioning, that is, the emotional, cognitive and behavioral levels. When one forgives, certain negative elements are subtracted from each level, while other neutral or positive elements are added to each level (Enright et al., 1992). On an affective level, negative emotions such as anger, hatred, resentment, sadness and/or contempt are given up (Richards, 1988). Although this may occur slowly, it is eventually accomplished (Enright et al., 1992). More neutral ones replace these negative emotions. Positive affect such as compassion can then eventually replace the neutral emotions (see Downie, 1965; Cunningham, 1985; North, 1987). On a cognitive level, the

offended person ceases entertaining condemning judgements and the planning of revenge, where this was present. These are substituted by positive thoughts towards the offender. These could assume the form of wishing the offender well (Smedes, 1984) and viewing him/her respectfully as a moral being. In the behavioral system, one does not act out the revenge, if such were occurring, however subtle (Enright et al., 1992). This is replaced by a willingness to join in a 'loving community' with the offender and perhaps making overtures in that direction (Augsburger, 1981).

3. Forgiveness and terms in which definitions of forgiveness are frequently embedded

3.1 Forgiveness and Christianity

Many Christian scholars are of the opinion that forgiveness has its origin in Christianity and that a discussion of forgiveness will inevitably include a discussion of religion. For this reason, discussions on the subject can generally be found in religious writings. The crux of the argument is that any discussion on forgiveness should start with the Bible or with God. As Emerson states: "Where else can we find a Christian understanding of forgiveness?" (1965, p.27). Similarly, Lotter (1996) argues that, in any study of forgiveness, it is important to return to Scripture in order to get a basis for what real forgiveness is. In trying to explicate the nature of the inextricable link between forgiveness and Christianity, Calian persuasively argues that "To say that Christianity is Christ, is to understand the Christian faith as forgiveness personified in Christ. Furthermore, this forgiveness, centered in Christ, has the power to humanize our existence" (1981, p.439). Lotter (1996) provides a detailed outline of a number of Biblical terms that is consistent with the meaning of forgiveness, as do Enright et al. (1992).

In arguing for the importance of forgiveness if reconciliation is to be accomplished in Post-Apartheid South Africa, Lotter (1996) asserts that Christianity teaches us that our need to forgive is a demonstration of our need for God. In his attempt to stress the obligatory nature of human forgiveness, he argues that God's forgiving serves as an important impetus and a role model for forgiving between persons. God, therefore, forces us to forgive one another because He has forgiven us. Brandsma (1982) expands on this view when he states that, Christian values provide an imperative not only to forgive, but also to go further and re-establish a loving relationship when possible. A crucial corollary to this imperative is the fact that a person does not in any sense deserve to be forgiven.

3.2. Forgiveness and Morality

One of the central debates around the issue of forgiveness is whether forgiveness is a moral issue or whether it should be confined to the realms of religion. Although the Christian view has dominated this debate, a significant proportion of those involved in the debate support the idea that forgiveness is essentially a moral issue (see Benn, 1996; Holmgren, 1993; Neblett, 1974; North, 1987; Smith, 1997). North (1987) blames the Christian domination on the fact that, while forgiveness has been recognized as a moral response, modern moral philosophers who work outside the confines of a religious context have largely ignored it.

Some philosophers, in defence of their moral stance on forgiveness, have proceeded to severely criticize the Christian perspective. Foremost among those are Kolnai and Minas (in Lewis, 1980) as well as O'Shaughnessy (1967). For Kolnai, forgiveness refers to a context of inter-personal relations. He is steadfast in his belief that forgiveness is pre-eminently an ethical subject and that a paper written about it cannot help being a paper about Ethics. He speaks disparagingly of the

ambiguity of biblical phraseology (for examples of these, see Lotter, 1996 and Enright et al., 1992), and of the misleading theological merging of forgiveness with concepts such as reconciliation. Similarly, Minas is spirited and well organized in her attack on religious connotations of forgiveness and painstakingly emphasizes the moral nature of forgiveness. In addition to this, she also declares that any belief in a connection between forgiving and God is a radically mistaken one as divine nature precludes its possessor from being able to forgive. Thus she claims that "...far from it being the case that human frailty makes forgiveness difficult or impossible, it is the possession of distinctly human, non-divine characteristics that makes forgiveness appropriate for human beings. Only a human being can forgive – a divine being cannot" (p. 237).

3.3. Forgiveness and reconciliation

The tendency of some scholars to use forgiveness and reconciliation interchangeably has generated yet another debate amongst those who express scientific interest in the study of forgiveness. This tendency has attracted considerable criticism. Enright & Human Development Study Group (1994) and Brandsma (1982) seem to be at the forefront of this. Enright et al. (1992) motivate their standpoint by arguing that, as an act of mercy, forgiveness occurs independently from remorseful actions of the injurer. It is, therefore, an unconditional action, which is controlled exclusively by the injured person. Reconciliation on the other hand, is a process where both injurer and injured act to resolve their differences.

A number of views exist regarding the relationship between forgiveness and reconciliation. For example, reconciliation has been identified as both a component and a goal of forgiveness (Smedes, 1984). According to Patton (1985), forgiving is related to but not conditional on

reconciliation, while Smit (1995) subsumes forgiveness within the process of reconciliation. The majority of these perspectives are derived from the Judeo-Christian theology where reconciliation is held as the central reason for forgiving (Fow, 1996). According to Taylor (1946), Christian theology equates forgiveness with full reconciliation, rather than a preparatory step towards it. Based on his definition in the previous section, Pattison (1965) seems to support this view, as does Fow (1996) and McCullough et al., (1997). Similarly, Row et al. (1989) acknowledges that forgiveness "...ends in a psychological, if not face-to-face reconciliation with the one who was perceived as hurtful" (1989, p.239). At the same time, however, he makes accommodation for the possibility of forgiveness without reconciliation by articulating that the critical dimension of forgiving is that one experiences a shift in one's understanding of, and relationship to, the offender, oneself, and the world. Fow (1996) also cautions us that forgiveness does not always result in reconciliation, as this may depend on the offender being able to assure the offended that he/she will not be wronged again.

Regardless of which view one chooses, there seems to be consensus that there exists a delicate relationship between the two phenomena although the nature of such a relationship is disputed. Within the context of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, this view seems to be supported. Van der Walt (1996) especially argues that forgiveness and reconciliation are two of the six most important requirements if South Africa wishes to deal successfully with the past. He warns that reconciliation and forgiveness should not be regarded as mutually exclusive, but as two steps which forms part of an integrated whole. For Van der Walt (1996) reconciliation is the result of the whole process of dealing with the past. It is the culmination of the said process and cannot, as such, occur before forgiveness has been granted. Forgiveness can thus be defined as one of the preconditions for reconciliation to take place (Van der Walt, 1996). Lotter agrees when he argues that "forgiveness clears the way for reconciliation, for in forgiveness, the

stumbling block in the way of reconciliation is removed” (1996, p.2). Similarly, within the context of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and its commitment to nation building and national unity, reconciliation is regarded as the outcome of a process of which forgiveness is seen as occupying an integral position.

3.4. Forgiveness and confession

Numerous studies have investigated the relationship between forgiveness and confession (the acceptance of personal blame and responsibility). Weiner, Graham, Peter & Zmuidinas (1991) based their investigation into the above-mentioned relationship on attribution theory. They examined whether confession by an offender alters the attribution of blame, thus addressing the issue of remorse as a prerequisite for forgiveness. They also wanted to determine whether confession is a means of controlling unacceptable behaviour. They found that non-mandated confession (confession to an offence prior to an accusation for the offence) restores positive perceptions of the confessor’s moral character. This is based on the assumption that confession signals the recognition of a basic rule that has been violated and reaffirms that the transgressor values that rule (Darby & Schlenker, (1982). They further found that the confession had a more positive affective reaction on the receivers of the confession and that they were more likely to engage in forgiveness.

Weiner et al. (1991) go on to state that confession can be effective in defusing anger and increasing power. It is, therefore, possible for individuals to manipulate others so that they are exonerated, forgiven, and perceived more positively. In this case, confession is used as a conscious ploy rather than springing from overriding guilt. The offender is motivated by the desire to rid him/herself from blame and responsibility. For this reason Close states that: “The

denial of responsibility or the acceptance of an exaggerated or inappropriate responsibility can be looked upon as maneuvers by which a person attempts...to get others to accept him” (1970, p.9). North (1987) emphasize the centrality of responsibility in forgiving when she suggests that the value of forgiveness lies in the fact that it essentially requires of the wrongdoer to recognize responsibility for his/her actions.

3.5. Forgiveness and anger

Anger is something far more serious and more complex than resentment or normal flashes of irritation caused by everyday inconveniences. A safe assumption is that anger is a result of a deep injury, whether physical, psychological or emotional, and that it is inextricably mixed with other reactions such as shame and helplessness. According to Fitzgibbons (1986), “anger is a strong feeling of displeasure and antagonism aroused by a sense of injury or wrong” (p.629).

When a victim’s anger is absent altogether, it is often a cause for considerable concern.

According to Davenport (1991), anger has a self-affirming root to it. It is a protest and its absence often signals depression and resignation. She further states that in times of violation, anger is the only source available to the victim that allows a degree of integrity to be maintained.

“To ask someone to give up one’s anger... when it is the glue that holds the self together (however ineffectively), can feel like another violation” (1991, p.141).

As stated previously, Fitzgibbons (1986) argues that the treatment and management of anger is essential for both the emotional well being of the individual and for the good of society. He contends that forgiveness is a powerful therapeutic intervention that can liberate people from their anger and guilt in a number of ways by:

- helping the person forget the painful experiences of their past;

- facilitating the reconciliation of relationships more than the expression of anger;
- decreasing the likelihood that anger will be misdirected;
- expedite the resolution of depression and anxiety; and
- improve the ability to express anger more appropriately.

Elsewhere it is suggested that the subjective feelings of the angry person include pain of the injury as well as pleasure at the expectation of revenge and letting off steam. Similarly, Brandsma (1982) argues that the quest for revenge results in excessive energy being channeled into the generation of destructive fantasies. "...and often an emotional commitment is made to do justice...if it is the last thing I do" (1982, p. 41). Anger is not fully resolved until a conscious decision is made to let go of the desire for revenge or to forgive. The expression of anger is generally regarded as the best way to deal with that emotion.

Fitzgibbons (1986), however, warns that although it is sometimes important to express one's anger, its value as a solution is limited for several reasons. Firstly, mere words cannot compensate for deep-rooted anger. Secondly, the expression of anger does not result in a true sense of justice or in freedom from the desire to seek revenge. And finally, the excessive expression of anger can lead to even more anger or aggression. Davenport (1991) explains that the discrepancy in approaches to anger has to do with the differing goals of various psychotherapeutic orientations. Prescribing the same treatment to all people who have difficulty with anger could be problematic. "It will be more helpful to consider carefully the function that anger serves in the personality under consideration – and what the effects would be if the anger were removed – than to implement precipitous interventions" (Davenport, 1991, p. 140).

People's ability to forgive will depend on a variety of factors such as the experience of having

been forgiven themselves, the nature and extent of the offence, and the meaning attributed to it (Walrond-Skinn, 1998).

3.6. Forgiveness and apology

It is well documented that receiving an apology from someone who has hurt us encourages forgiving (Al-Mabuk, Enright & Cardis, 1995; Darby & Schlenker, 1982; McCullough et al., 1997; Weiner et al., 1991), particularly when apologies are elaborate and include admissions of guilt (Darby & Schlenker, 1982; Weiner et al., 1991). Weiner et al. (1991) contend that an apology by the offender can facilitate forgiving by interrupting the offended person's inference that an offender's acts correspond to and derives from the offender's character. McCullough et al. (1997), on the other hand, maintains that the relationship between apology and forgiving can also be explained as a function of increased empathy with the offender. "The expression of an apology may lead to the perception that the offender is experiencing guilt and emotional distress due to his or her awareness of how the hurtful actions harmed the offended partner" (1997, p.324). The offended person's experience of empathy for the offender can be expected to be proportional to his/her (the offended person's) experience of a reduction in motivations towards revenge and the maintenance of estrangement (Batson, Batson, Todd, Brummett, Shaw & Aldeguer, 1995). An apology by an offender can, therefore, lead to an increase in the experience of empathy by an offended person towards an offender, thus motivating forgiveness on the part of the offended towards an offender.

4. The therapeutic value of forgiveness

According to Hebl and Enright (1993), forgiveness as a therapeutic goal is relatively new and forgiveness has only recently been regarded as such. Bergin and Jensen (1990) attempt to provide a possible explanation for the increased use of forgiveness in psychotherapy. In a national survey conducted in the United States, they determined that there is an increase in religiosity among psychotherapists. Unfortunately, these results are congruent with, and give added weight to the generally held belief that forgiveness is essentially about religion and in the Western world this becomes synonymous with being tied to Christianity. They nonetheless contend that this increased religiosity, which is often unexpressed in the secular framework of therapeutic practice, "...could provide the basis for new dimensions of practice that might bridge the cultural gap between a secular profession and a more religious public" (1990, p.3). Similarly, Worthington and DiBlasio (1990) state that religious therapists assume functions traditionally carried out by the clergy, including promoting forgiveness within their clients. Hope (1987) has speculated that the granting of forgiveness has received little attention from non-religious therapists because it has been associated with religious ritual. It can, therefore, be assumed that the extent to which therapists are willing to practice forgiveness therapy is related to their level of religiosity.

A number of studies suggest that forgiveness can be promoted through clinical intervention (Al-Mabuk et al., 1995; Hebl & Enright, 1993; McCullough et al., 1997). From a clinical perspective, it has been suggested that forgiving those who have hurt us is an integral part of the movement towards responsibility that some therapists seek to promote (Close, 1970). It can also be restorative (Al-Mabuk et al., 1995), and thus a key part of the psychological healing process (Hope, 1987). Fitzgibbons (1986) emphasizes the therapeutic use of forgiveness in the treatment

of anger. Re-enactment of the event that resulted in hurt or pain is especially important if forgiveness is to be facilitated within the therapeutic situation. If successful, this may result in the re-experiencing of the hurt and anger in a context of exploration (Brandsma, 1982), and will eventually result in the healthy release or resolution of anger. According to Moreno (1965), these psychodrama techniques are helpful, particularly when denial is very strong and it prevents forgiveness from materializing. When the patient experiences difficulty in expressing anger in re-enactment, it is possible for the therapist to play the role of the patient and verbalize what the patient is unable to express (Fitzgibbons, 1986).

Hope (1987) on the other hand, sees the therapeutic use of forgiveness as useful in releasing a person from the need to seek repayment or revenge for past hurts. In his view, forgiveness is a paradoxical act that allows the client to heal as he/she gives up the right to revenge and takes a more humble position. Hope (1987) suggests a number of steps in the forgiving process within a therapeutic situation:

- The first is to acknowledge the hurt and pain. This is not as easy or obvious, as it seems as it means such things as swallowing your pride and admitting that you are vulnerable.
- The next step is to decide to forgive. You need not know how you are going to forgive. You only need to make a conscious decision to forgive the one that has hurt you.
- The third thing is to remember that forgiveness is not easy.
- Fourthly, it is important to forgive yourself. Sometimes a double standard operates whereby others are forgiven for things which we would never forgive ourselves. We end up keeping ourselves hostage by not forgiving ourselves.
- Finally, and perhaps most importantly, is to consider the damaging consequences of non-forgiveness to the self.

5. Objections raised against forgiveness

Various objections, especially from the field of philosophy, have been lodged against the idea of one person forgiving another. In attempting to demonstrate the harmful nature of forgiveness, Lang (1994), in his criticism of forgiveness, uses Spinoza's criticism of repentance as an analogy. Just as Spinoza asserts that the person who repents, is miserable twice, so Lang (1994) suggests that someone who forgives the person who repents, may even be miserable more than twice. Nietzsche (1887), on the other hand, argued that forgiveness is a sign of weakness and an inability to assert one's right to a just solution. Trainer (in Enright et al., 1992) provides an explanation for the above assertion. He found several approaches to forgiveness and states that Nietzsche's objection is made on the basis of what he refers to as 'role-expected' forgiveness. The role-expected forgiver submits to a moral duty to forgive, even though he/she is unconvinced of its merits. Because the forgiver is incapable of retaliating, he/she reluctantly relinquishes his/her claim to justice and maintains resentment with consequent low self-esteem. Nietzsche may have been referring to this type of forgiveness (Enright et al. 1992). In an additional defence to forgiveness, North reminds us that: "The forgiving character is one which is achievable only after a hard-fought battle, and should not be confused with moral feebleness" (1987, p. 507)

Lewis (1980) raised the concern that a forgiving attitude may result in paroling criminals who may perpetuate crime. According to Enright et al. (1992), this objection confuses forgiveness with legal mercy or pardon. While forgiveness prepares society to welcome the freed criminal, it does not compel us to hastily open the cell door. A further objection is that forgiveness may perpetuate injustice. This objection is especially advanced by those who confuse forgiveness with reconciliation (Enright et al., 1992; Enright & The Human Development Study Group,

1994). If person A forgives person B, it does not imply the coming together of persons A and B. By forgiving person B, person A does not necessarily make him/herself vulnerable to further abuse (Enright et al., 1992).

Forgiveness is also seen as inducing inferiority in the offender (O'Shaughnessy, 1967). If person A forgives person B then person B may view person A as a better person. Such an objection, however, assumes that forgiveness has to be offered verbally to the offender. As Fow (1996) reminds us, forgiveness does not necessarily have to involve a spoken pardon. "I, as a forgiver, may quietly resolve to forgive another, merely ceasing negative and increasing positive thoughts, feelings and behaviours directed at an offender" (Enright et al., 1992, p.104). A further concern that has been raised, is the fact that forgiveness may produce undue hypersensitivity to future hurts by enlarging minor interpersonal offences (Downie, 1965). It can, however, also be argued that true forgiveness may involve an honest and relative objective assessment of pain.

"Forgiveness is an attempt to overcome the distorting effects of pain and anger and, therefore, should decrease oversensitivity in persons prone to such a reaction" (Enright et al., 1992, p.104). According to Sells and Hargrave (1998), forgiveness is also often perceived as means by which patriarchal religious and social systems can maintain female subjugation. Such a criticism is justified when forgiveness as a therapeutic intervention is employed in a naive and vague way such as letting go (as had been mentioned in Section 2), thus promoting a mentality of 'I'll just forget about it'. Underdeveloped and simplistic constructs of forgiveness pose a threat to the mental health of those who have suffered and legitimize the criticism that forgiveness is not an important therapeutic intervention. Sells and Hargrave (1998) endorse this view. We should, therefore, avoid the assumption that forgiveness is good for everyone regardless of individual circumstances, as this would transform it into yet another form of oppression. Thus doing more harm than good.

6. The structure of forgiveness

Forgiveness is more complex than it seems and it entails more than the mere uttering of a few words. Lotter (1996) reminds us that forgiveness is something radical that should not be avoided, or glossed over, but tackled with great vigour by all South Africans, given the hurt we have inflicted on one another. But what exactly is forgiveness and what does the words 'I forgive you' encompass? According to Van der Walt (1996), forgiveness includes far more than saying, 'I am not angry with you anymore.' Forgiveness is unconditional and does not entail revenge.

Compensation should, therefore, not be a precondition to the granting of forgiveness. Walrond-Skinn (1998) reiterates this when she argues that forgiveness is an offer to the person who has violated you regardless of that person's response. Although forgiveness is unconditional, it presupposes that the offender will not commit the same wrongdoing again. Those who have wronged others should thus realize that without a redressing of the wrongs of Apartheid, good relationships for the future cannot be expected. In other words, forgiveness cannot be expected, as long as injustice continues.

It is generally accepted that forgiving someone occurs in the face of deep unjust hurt. The hurt or injury might be physical, psychological, emotional or moral (Smedes, 1984). Implicit in this, is the fact that forgiveness only occurs between people, not between a person and an inanimate object, even though deep hurts in life can occur in both situations (Enright et al., 1992). Minas emphasizes the fact that forgiveness is appropriately directed only towards actions which have wronged the forgiver (Lewis, 1980). She asserts that, in forgiving the offender, the individual who forgives, gives up resentment, hatred and/or anger towards the other, and instead tries to take a stance of love and compassion (North, 1987). According to Enright and The Human

Development Study Group (1994), the forgiver understands that the offender has no right to such benevolence, but nonetheless offers it. This further emphasizes the unconditionality of forgiveness. Forgiving an offender is a choice on the part of the offended and should not be forced upon him/her.

Shriver (1995) provides an interesting explication of the structure of forgiveness, which, he emphasizes, is especially relevant in a political context. In his formulation, forbearance of revenge (which corresponds with Van der Walt's conception of the structure of forgiveness) and empathy for the enemy's humanity is of paramount importance. He aims to reveal the presence of forgiveness throughout political history and to demonstrate how forgiveness can turn political hatred into political neighborliness.

The issues outlined above draw our attention to what the structure of forgiveness is. In other words, it refers to what researchers regard as the essential components of forgiveness. In order to further explicate or enhance our understanding of this structure, it is deemed necessary to mention some of the things forgiveness is not. According to Smedes (1984), forgiveness is not forgetting, although McGary (1989) alerts us to the fact that people who forgive, do sometimes forget. Deep personal injury, especially the type on which the present study focuses, is rarely removed from consciousness. Enright et al. (1992) further warn that forgiveness is not reconciliation. Other than reconciliation, forgiveness is the response of one person. Forgiveness and reconciliation are related but only to the extent that reconciliation may be a result of forgiveness. Forgiveness, therefore, increases the possibility for reconciliation to materialize.

Forgiveness is also not condonation or indifference (Enright & The Human Development Study Group, 1994; Scobie & Scobie, 1996). The forgiver is aware that injustice has taken place and

yet takes a stance of benevolence toward the offender (Enright & The Human Development Study Group, 1994). "Those who condone injustice overlook unfairness" (Al-Mabuk et al, 1995, p.428). According to Brandsma (1982), some people are not able to forgive because they cognitively assume that forgiving is equated with condoning an action. The granting of forgiveness by an offended person is further not contingent on an apology by the offender. "Otherwise, the injured party's healing from hurt through forgiveness will be dependent on the offender's regret (Enright et al., 1992, p. 102).

7. The process of forgiveness

As mentioned in the introduction, forgiveness as an unfolding process that takes time, has been emphasized by a number of researchers (Human Development Study Group, 1991; Fitzgibbons, 1986; Hope, 1987). According to Walrond-Skinn (1998), 'authentic process forgiveness' is the movement through a series of cognitive, emotional and behavioral reconstructions of the events surrounding the relational offence and the relationships in which these events are embedded. Enright and the Human Development Study Group (1991) developed a process model of forgiveness that integrates virtually all published psychological models on forgiveness. This integrated model, which describes and synthesizes all the cognitive, affective and behavioural developments that accompany the process of forgiveness, appears in Table 1.

In terms of this model, a person who has been harmed experiences pain or hurt. The initial response to this is for the person to set up defence mechanisms such as denial or repression in an attempt to ease the pain. The process of forgiveness is initiated when the person realizes and examines these psychological defences (unit-1). This causes the initial pain to resurface which

often leads to anger (Enright et al., 1992; Fitzgibbons, 1986), resentment (North, 1987; McGary, 1989), or even hatred (Smedes, 1984) and revenge (unit-2). Units 3-7 encompass the additional

Table 1: A process model of forgiveness (Enright & The Human Development Study Group, 1991)

Psychological issues involved in the process of forgiving¹
1. Examination of psychological defences (Kiel, 1986).
2. Confrontation of anger, the point is to release, not harbour, the anger (Trainer, 1981).
3. Admittance of shame, when this is appropriate (Patton, 1985).
4. Awareness of cathexis (Droll, 1984).
5. Awareness of cognitive rehearsal of the offence (Droll, 1984).
6. Insight that the injured party may be comparing self with the injurer (Kiel, 1986).
7. Insight into a possibly altered 'just world' view (Flanagen, 1987).
8. A change of heart / conversion / new insights that old resolution strategies are not working (North, 1987).
9. A willingness to explore forgiveness as an option.
10. Commitment to forgive the offender (Neblett, 1974).
11. Reframing, through role taking, who the wrongdoer is by viewing him/her in context
12. Empathy towards the offender (Cunningham, 1985).
13. Awareness of compassion, as it emerges, towards the offender (Droll, 1984).
14. Acceptance, absorption of the pain (Bergin, 1988).
15. Realization that self has needed others forgiveness in the past (Cunningham, 1985).
16. Realization that self has been perhaps permanently changed by injury (Close, 1970).
17. Awareness of decreased negative affect and, perhaps increased positive affect, if this begins to emerge, towards the injurer (Smedes, 1984).
18. Awareness of internal emotional release (Smedes, 1984).

¹ The references at the end of each unit are prototypical examples of discussion of that unit.

emotional discomfort that people frequently experience. These include sensing shame, investing great amount of emotional energy in the situation (cathexis), continually replaying the scene in one's mind, comparing one's injured state with the offender's more fortunate one and thus concluding that life is profoundly unfair (Enright et al. 1992).

As the injured person realizes the ineffectiveness of previous ways of coping, he/she resolves to change his/her situation (units 8-10). This is usually the turning point where the injured person, after having viewed the situation from the perspective of the offender (unit 10), feels empathy (unit 11) towards the offender and commits him/herself towards forgiving the offender (Smedes, 1984). This is done not to condone or to distort, but to understand the motives and behaviours of the offender more accurately (Hebl & Enright, 1993). Compassion (unit 12) facilitates the acceptance of pain (unit 13) and the granting of forgiveness. The insights of units 14 and 15 draw the injured person's attention to the fact that as mortals, all of us are imperfect. These serve to decrease the negative affect towards the offender and are an indication that forgiveness is emerging (units 16-18).

Truong (1991) and Brandsma (1982) conducted two of the few qualitative analyses into the process of forgiveness. In his phenomenological analysis, Brandsma (1982) emphasizes two issues, which he regards as critical to the process of forgiveness. Firstly, he asserts that in order to forgive, one must re-experience the hurt of the violator in a different context, one that allows less threat and more availability of resources. He emphasizes the importance of the therapeutic relationship in this regard. In addition to this, one needs to become aware of one's need or dependency in the situation of violation. If we did not need anything from anyone, they couldn't hurt us, we wouldn't get angry, and they wouldn't need forgiving. "Re-experiencing a hurt in the context of a therapeutic relationship while owning one's needs usually heals and broadens the

self...” (Brandsma, 1982, p.43). The second vital issue that he emphasizes is to abandon one’s egocentric position of only seeing the other in terms of one’s own needs. This is similar to unit 11 in Table 1. Brandsma (1982) calls for fusion rather than separation. By this he means that one should appreciate another’s motives, needs and reasons for acting, as this will inevitably help one to be more magnanimous. Truong’s (1991) study, also conducted from a phenomenological approach, involved 15 adults who claimed to have been able to forgive. He identified twelve common themes, many of which paralleled those in the model proposed by Enright & the Human Development Study Group (1991). These themes further existed in three phases.

- The management phase: This phase involves the identification of the negative defence strategies, the expression of negative feelings which result from confronting pain, detaching oneself and assessing one’s situation, support and spirituality, acceptance, and decision making and goal setting.
- The transformation phase: this phase consists of action, understanding, letting go and engaging.
- The resultant phase: The resultant phase is facilitated by the previous phase. During this stage, reconciliation is made possible and opportunities for growth and for the individual to carry on with his/her life now exist.

Although the two models outlined in this section do not exhaustively describe the process whereby one person forgives another, they do illustrate that the journey of forgiveness is complex and involves many progressions before the abandonment of resentment and the advent of forgiveness (Enright et al., 1992). The models outlined above are, therefore, not meant to constitute a blueprint of the form that the forgiveness process will assume. They should rather be regarded as outlines of the most common psychological constructs that have been identified in

those who claimed to have undergone the process of forgiving those who have caused them harm.

8. Conclusion

Research into the structure and process of forgiveness has increased significantly during the last few years. There now exist a considerable body of descriptive literature in which the benefits of forgiveness are also claimed (Sells & Hargrave, 1998). This will enable more precise therapeutic interventions to be devised in which professionals help people forgive (Enright & The Human Development Study Group, 1994). According to Row et al (1989), a major shortcoming is that most research on forgiveness focus solely on the hurt inflicted by someone in a personal relationship. There thus exist a need to explore issues related to forgiveness where an unknown other hurts one; for example, where a person's human rights were grossly violated in a political context. This study falls into this category and it is hoped that this project will contribute towards filling the above-mentioned void that currently characterizes forgiveness research.

CHAPTER 4.

METATHEORETICAL CONTEXT

1. Introduction

According to Mouton (1996), it is generally accepted in the philosophy of science, that no research findings can be conclusively proved on the basis of empirical research data. In the different stages of the research process, the researcher is compelled to make assumptions about specific theories and methodological strategies that are not tested in the specific study. These assumptions underlie the reason why a researcher prefers one theory or paradigm to another. One important category of such assumptions is the metatheoretical assumptions underlying the paradigm in which a study is grounded. "Because of the argumentative and public nature of scientific communication, this often tacit dimension of scientific practice should be made explicit" (Mouton, 1996, p.174). In accordance with Mouton's suggestion, the aim of this chapter is, therefore, to provide an elaboration of the metatheoretical framework that underpins the study.

2. Paradigms

Thomas Kuhn originally used the term 'paradigm' in 1962 in his attempt to explicate the nature of the growth and development of the science. Since then, it has acquired multiple meanings (Mouton, 1996). The meaning of relevance to the present study, is the one that defines a paradigm as a basic set of beliefs that guide action (Guba & Lincoln, 1994). The beliefs are basic in that they must be accepted simply on faith because their ultimate truthfulness cannot be established. Therefore, "it (paradigms) represents a world view that defines, for its holder, the nature of the world, the nature of the individuals and their possible relations to the world or parts of it" (Guba & Lincoln, 1994, p.53).

A paradigm encompasses four dimensions. These dimensions further contain the criteria, assumptions, values and methodological guidelines that inform research practice within a paradigmatic framework. The following are the dimensions as outlined by Mouton (1996) and (Schurink, 1998):

- The ontological dimension: this dimension defines for the proponents of the paradigm, the fundamental nature of the social reality.
- The epistemological dimension: scientific inquiry is driven not only by the search for truth, but a valid and reliable understanding of the truth. This dimension defines what is regarded as truth.
- The methodological dimension: This dimension specifies the methods that the researcher will employ in order to arrive at what is regarded as the truth, valid knowledge or reality.
- The teleological dimension: this dimension defines for its proponents, the aim of scientific research.

3. The interpretive paradigm

The interpretive paradigm is an umbrella term that encompasses a number of approaches, all of which can claim to be interpretive on the basis of subscribing to a philosophy of an interpretation of meaning. Interpretive social scientists focus on the processes by which meanings are created, negotiated, sustained and modified within a specific context of human action (Schwandt, 1994). "In general, the interpretive approach is the systematic analysis of socially meaningful action through the direct detailed observation of people in natural settings in order to arrive at understandings and interpretations of how people create and maintain their social worlds" (Neuman, 1997, p.68). Central to this approach is the notion of understanding. According to

Mouton (1996), this insistence on interpretive understanding requires a methodology, which emphasizes the following:

- Unstructured observation and face-to-face interviewing.
- Idiographic and thick descriptions.
- Qualitative analysis.
- Objectivity defined as intersubjective and empathic attitude of the insider.

This study will be approached from a perspective of hermeneutical understanding. Hermeneutics, a theory of meaning that originated in the nineteenth century, emphasizes a detailed reading or examination of 'text', which could refer to a conversation, written words, or pictures (Ricoeur, 1977). According to Neuman (1997), a researcher conducts a reading of the text with the explicit aim of uncovering the meaning embedded in it. The reader brings his own subjectivities to the text. When studying it, he/she tries to absorb or get inside the viewpoint it presents as a whole, and then to develop an understanding of how its parts relate to the whole. In other words, true meaning is rarely simple or obvious. It can only be accessed through a detailed study of the text, contemplating its many messages and seeking the connections among its parts (Neuman, 1997). This is what is known as the concept of the 'hermeneutical circle', i.e. the notion that understanding operates in a circular dialectical fashion because it involves reference to what is already known (Packer & Addison, 1989a).

3.1. Core components of the interpretive paradigm

What follows are the components that are central to the interpretive paradigm and, therefore, relevant to the present study.

3.1.1. The text as the focus of interpretation

The suitability of the text as the object of the social science has been a contentious issue. Specific objections have been raised with regards to the interpretation of texts precisely because they are texts and not spoken language (Ricoeur, 1977). Ricoeur emphasizes the importance of the text as the focus of the interpretation. He attempts to demonstrate not only the extent to which we may consider the notion of text as a good paradigm for the so-called object of the social science, but also the extent to which we may use the methodology of text-interpretation as a paradigm for interpretation in general in the field of the human sciences (Ricoeur, 1976).

Ricoeur (1981) further draws our attention to the distinction between written language and spoken language. He employs the concept of discourse to justify this distinction. He argues that written discourse is distinguished from spoken discourse because in the transition from the spoken to the written, the meaning of the discourse establishes itself as autonomous. In the first place, a rupture occurs between the meaning of the text and the intention of the author. Secondly, in the transition from the spoken to the written discourse, meaning liberates itself from the cultural context in which it originated. Finally, the meaning of a text is independent of any specific addressee, including its original public. Thus, according to Ricoeur, there is an element of 'distancing' or 'objectivity' between the text and interpreter which has no connection with 'method', but is associated with the text itself as a written document. From this objectivity derives the possibility of explaining (Ricoeur, 1977). He uses the autonomous nature of textual meaning to explicate what he takes to constitute the fundamental polarity of textual meaning, i.e. the polarity between sense and reference. The sense of a text consists of 'what is said' by the text and its reference consists in the extra-linguistic reality 'about which' a text says what it says (van Veuren, 1993).

Ricoeur (1981) uses the distinction between sense and reference to demonstrate the dialectical relationship that exists between understanding (*verstehen*) and explanation (*erklären*). Whereas explanation has its roots in the natural sciences with its universal laws and hypotheses that are to be empirically verified, understanding is essentially derived from the human sciences (the German *Geisteswissenschaften*), where science has to do with the experiences of other subjects (Ricoeur, 1976). Thus for Ricoeur, explanation is our explication of the range of propositions and meanings, whereas understanding refers to our comprehension or grasping, as a whole, of the chain of partial meanings in one act of synthesis. The relationship between understanding and explanation is dialectical in the sense that understanding in itself is not sufficient but requires explanation to complete its task, and is transformed by explanation. In a similar way, explanation in itself is not sufficient but requires interpretation to complete its task, and is transformed by interpretation.

3.1.2. Interpretation

Ricoeur proposes an approach to interpretation, known as structural analysis, in which he integrates the concepts of explanation and interpretation. He starts by claiming that meaningful human action can be treated as an analogue of a text. These analogies refer to the autonomy which human action acquires by surpassing its temporary, situational character and by becoming fixed in enduring social structures. "Human action leaves 'traces' on social life when it contributes to the emergence of social patterns or structures" (van Veuren, 1993, p.137). In this process, the meaning of action is removed from the event of the action and becomes something objective (Ricoeur, 1981). Thus social patterns and structures can be seen as 'documents' of human action which can be interpreted.

Ricoeur (1976) further argues that the notion of text also serves to clarify the historical reception of certain social structures. Much like the written fixation of discourse emancipates it from its original context in writing, so the importance of meaningful action can transcend the relevance it had in the context in which it occurred. In this way, the meaning of human action is something that is addressed to an indefinite range of possible readers. "All significant deeds and events are, in this way, open to a kind of 'practical interpretation' through present praxis" (van Veuren, 1993, p. 138).

Based on the analogies between texts and meaningful human action, Ricoeur thus argues that, the opposition between explanation and understanding can be overcome in the social science. If we concede that meaningful social action is purposive and motivational, then purposes can be explained in terms of motivations by giving reasons for an action instead of pointing to the causes. Giving reasons for an action is analogous to guessing. This then makes provision for the extension of the methodology of guess and validation in text interpretation to interpretation and explanation in the field of human action (Ricoeur, 1977). According to Ricoeur (1981), this extension is supported by the case of juridical reasoning, where procedures of validation (weighing and evaluating of evidence) are used in deciding a conflict of interpretations about the meaning of an action, e.g. whether an action is manslaughter or murder.

Based on the above, Ricoeur claims that structural analysis can function as "depth semantics" in the explanation and understanding of social phenomena. Social structures can also be seen as attempts to cope with existential perplexities, human predicaments and deep-rooted conflicts. These structures too serve a referential function, in that they point to social problems. In this way they become analogous to texts which have a non-ostensive reference. As the reader of a text is obliged to commit himself to the meaning that the text has for him in his present situation, so

understanding of the meaning of social phenomena cannot be attained without a personal commitment by the interpreter. He further warns, however, that this commitment does not give free reign to personal prejudices and subjective bias in the social science. Understanding is not biased because it is mediated by explanatory functions that precedes it, nor is it subjective because it is not based on the identification with another subject (Ricoeur, 1976).

3.1.3. The hermeneutic circle

The concept of the hermeneutic circle is central to the concept of understanding for interpretive social scientists. According to Woolfolk, Sass & Messer (1988), understanding operates in a circular dialectical fashion because it inevitably involves reference to what is already known. To demonstrate this, they use the meaning of a sentence as an example. The sentence derives its meaning from individual words it comprises, but our interpretation of individual word meanings within a sentence is also governed by their relations within the sentence and the meaning of the sentence as a whole. Through interpretation, a complete meaning of the text can be arrived at by moving through all the levels of the whole-part relation and by accomplishing an interpenetration of the particular and the general at each level (van Veuren, 1993). Interpretation, therefore, occurs within a circle in which parts are always interpreted with some understanding of the whole, the understanding of which, in turn depends on an understanding of the constituent parts. What the hermeneutical circle, in effect does, is to emphasize the contextual nature of knowledge. For this reason Woolfolk et al (1988) contend that a fact does not exist independent from its context or its interpreter. It can be evaluated only in relation to the larger structure of theory or argument of which it is part. At the same time, this structural whole is dependent on its individual parts, as well as on other related information. Understanding, therefore, involves moving back and forth between the whole and its parts (Woolfolk et al., 1988). As Geertz puts it,

the circle of understanding involves “a continuous dialectical tackling between the most local of local detail and the most global of global structure in such a way as to bring both into view simultaneously” (1973, p.239).

Those who oppose hermeneutics have frequently warned against what they view as a vicious circle. Packer & Addison (1989a) counteracts this criticism when they argue that the circularity of understanding and interpretation is not vicious or aimless. Kvale (1996) elaborates on this when he states that circularity in the hermeneutical tradition should not be viewed as vicious, “but rather as *circulus fructuosus*, or spiral, which implies the possibility of a continuously deepened understanding of meaning” (1996, p.48). A true interpretive account is aimed at solving a practical dilemma. It is one that helps the researcher and the people studied – one that furthers the people’s concerns (Van Vlaenderen, 1997). Thus, for interpretive researchers, the goal of social research is to discover how people construct meaning in natural settings with the ultimate aim of developing a coherent and practically relevant understanding of social life. “An interpretive researcher wants to learn what is relevant or meaningful to the people being studied, or how individuals experience daily life” (Neuman, 1997, p.68). The hermeneutic circle therefore, turns out to be an inevitable part of our efforts to understand human phenomena (Packer & Addison, 1989a).

3.1.4. The fore-structure

According to Kvale (1996), interpretation within the hermeneutical tradition places emphasis on the interpreter’s ‘fore-knowledge’ or ‘fore-structure’ of a text’s subject matter. Packer & Addison (1989a) further elaborate on the notion of this fore-structure in order to enhance our

conception of the circularity of understanding. When we try to understand a new phenomenon, we are always thrown forward into it. We will approach it with some kind of preliminary understanding of what kind of phenomenon it is, and of what possible things might happen to it. In other words, we inevitably shape the phenomenon to fit a preconceived perspective (a fore-structure) that has been shaped by our expectations, culture, or traditions. Understanding, therefore, involves what Heidegger (1962) refers to as 'projection'. It is a structure of our way of being in the world, our living, our actions, and our interactions before it characterizes our knowledge and our science (Packer & Addison 1989a).

According to Packer & Addison (1989a), it is also important to emphasize that the hermeneutical circle is ontological rather than epistemological or methodological. They explain this stance by reminding us that projection is essentially a structure of our way of being in the world, our living, our actions and our interactions, before it characterizes our knowledge and our sciences. "Projection is an existential structure: our existence is such that we are thrown into future ways of acting that are made possible by our cultural and personal history" (p.34).

3.2. Validity in interpretation

There is a substantial debate over what constitutes a good interpretation in qualitative research (Altheide & Johnson, 1994). According to Denzin & Lincoln (1994, pp. 479-480), four basic positions on the issue can be distinguished.

- The first position are held by positivists who are of the opinion that a universal set of criteria should apply to all scientific research regardless of whether they are quantitative or qualitative.

- Proponents of the second position are labeled as post-positivists because they argue for a set of criteria that is unique to qualitative research, precisely because it represents an alternative paradigm to quantitative social research.
- The third position, postmodernism, contends that the very idea of assessing qualitative research is antithetical to the nature of this research and the world it attempts to study.
- Finally, poststructuralists argue that an entirely new set of criteria, separate from the positivist and post-positivist traditions, needs to be constructed. Such criteria would be informed by the qualitative project, stressing emotionality, subjectivity, feeling and other anti-foundational factors

According to Van Vlaenderen (1997), the central notions of the interpretive approach necessitate the need to define validation in an entirely different fashion from its meaning within a positivist approach. This approach is based on the development of universal laws, which explain real events through deduction from these laws. It includes the common assertion that reliability or stability of methods and findings is an indicator of validity, or accuracy and truthfulness of the findings. In an effort to divert from this approach and to make provision for a set of fundamental principles that would guarantee our knowledge claims in psychological inquiry, Packer & Addison (1989b) suggest we use the word evaluation rather than validation, and argue for criteria of reasonability in evaluating interpretive accounts. They propose that the following principles to evaluation in interpretive inquiry are reasonable: consistency; relation to other material: response of research participants; communicability to peers; response of these peers; relation to alternative perspectives and practical implications. They emphasize, however, that these are not ways of validating, but rather, that they are ways of judging whether what has been uncovered in an interpretive inquiry adequately answers the practical concern that stimulated a researcher to embark on a study in the first place. "What is uncovered in the course of a true interpretation is a

solution to the problem, the confusion, the question, the concern and the breakdown in understanding that motivated our inquiry in the first place” (Packer & Addison, 1989b, p.279).

4. Dimensions of the interpretive paradigm

What follows are the ontological, epistemological and teleological assumptions that underpin the interpretive paradigm. The methodological dimension will be addressed in the next chapter.

4.1. Ontological dimension

In terms of the interpretive paradigm, the social reality is not out there waiting to be discovered. Instead, the social world is largely what people perceive it to be. It exists as people experience it and give meaning to it. Social life is maintained by interactions among people through ongoing processes of communication and negotiation. This gives people an internally subjectively-experienced sense of reality. There is no single way of experiencing the world and those who occupy it. Therefore, “access to other human beings is possible. ... only by indirect means: what we experience initially are gestures, sound, and actions and only in the process of understanding do we take the step from external signs to underlying inner life” (Bleicher, 1980, p.9).

For interpretive researchers, the social reality is based on people’s definitions of it. A person’s definition of a situation, therefore, tells him/her how to assign meaning in conditions that are constantly changing (Neuman, 1997). In terms of the ontology, the interpretive paradigm therefore, assumes a relativistic stance (Guba & Lincoln, 1994).

4.2. Epistemological dimension

Epistemology deals with accepted ways of finding out what the nature of the social reality is. "It deals with the relationship between the researcher and the research topic and the justification for the methods used to collect, describe and interpret knowledge"(Van Vlaenderen, 1997, p.68).

From an interpretive perspective, social scientists determine the nature of the social reality through subjective and transactional means. The investigator and the object of investigation are assumed to be interactively linked so that the findings are created as the investigation proceeds. From this it become clear that the epistemological and ontological dimensions of the interpretive perspective are interconnected to the extent that the conventional distinction between the two disappear (Guba & Lincoln, 1994).

4.3. Teleological dimension

From an interpretive perspective, the aim of scientific research is to develop an understanding of social life and to discover how people construct meaning in social contexts. An interpretive account is one that is relevant or meaningful to the people under investigation. It focuses on how individuals experience their daily lives. The researcher's intention is to see things from the perspective of those he is studying. Interpretive researchers, therefore, study meaningful 'social action', not just external or observable behaviour of people (Denzin, 1996). According to Neuman (1997), social action refers to action to which people attach subjective meaning: it is activity with purpose or intent. The goal of interpretive inquiry is understanding and reconstructing the meanings that people initially hold, aiming towards consensus but still open to new interpretations as information and sophistication improves (Guba & Lincoln, 1994).

5. Conclusion

This chapter outlines the metatheoretical assumptions underlying the paradigm in which the study is embedded, that is Ricoeur's theory of textual interpretation, which will provide the paradigmatic framework for the study. It specifies the various components and assumptions, which further carry specifications on issues such as the aim of the study, as well as the methodological strategies that are to be employed in order to achieve these aims. By adopting an hermeneutical approach that provides in-depth descriptions of forgiveness as a psychological phenomenon, the researcher adds his support to the assertion of Fow (1996) and Row et al. (1989) that this approach is the most effective method by which the meaning and content of forgiveness can be explored. It can be seen as an attempt to enhance our understanding of forgiveness by compensating for the inadequacies inherent in an empiricist investigation of forgiveness. This understanding will be based on the interpretations of the researcher. While no truth claims are made, it is contended that the researcher's understanding provides a useful perspective of the phenomenon under investigation.

CHAPTER 5.

THE STUDY

1. Introduction

Two important assumptions mentioned in Chapter 3 underpin the aim of the study. The first is the acknowledgement that there is a significant shortage of research in the area of the process and structure of forgiveness with specific reference to gross human rights violations. The second is the inadequacy of the positivist experimental method, which has up to now dominated scientific scholarship on forgiveness, to fully explicate the psychological processes involved when one person forgives another. Based on these assumptions, the aim of the study will be to investigate the structure and process of forgiveness as experienced by individuals who experienced gross violation of their human rights. This investigation will then also be approached from a perspective of hermeneutical understanding. In this sense, the methodology was based on the theoretical and meta-theoretical foundations on which the study is anchored.

2. Aims of the study

The study had the following aims:

- to gain an in-depth understanding into the structure of forgiveness following gross human rights violations;
- to explicate the process by which forgiveness is subjectively experienced by individuals who suffered gross human rights violations, and;
- to examine the relationship between the structure and process of forgiveness.

3. Conceptualization of key terms

In this section, the key terms that are used in the study will be discussed. As the concept of forgiveness has already received considerable attention, it will be excluded from this discussion.

3.1. The structure of forgiveness

For the purpose of the study, the structure of forgiveness is defined as the way in which the forgiver relates to the perpetrator. It is, therefore, the culmination of the forgiveness process and defines for the reader what is meant when victims and survivors of gross human rights violations say 'I forgive you (the perpetrator)'. In addition to this, it also has the dual function of defining what forgiveness is not, as oppose to what it is.

3.2. The process of forgiveness

Central to the concept of the process of forgiveness is the time factor inherent in forgiveness, i.e. the assumption that forgiveness is a non-instantaneous unfolding process. This is congruent with the view adopted by Fitzgibbons (1986), Hope (1987) and especially Enright and the Human Development Study Group (1994). It involves tracing the various changes, cognitive, affective as well as behavioral, that takes place as the individual journeys from the time that his/her human rights were violated up until he/she decides to forgive the person responsible for the violation.

3.3. Victims and survivors

The study utilizes the terms 'victims and survivors' of gross human rights violations. This distinction is based on the fact that many of those who suffered gross human rights violations were not able to testify at the TRC. Some died, while others did not have the physical or mental capacity to appear before the Commission. For the purpose of this study, a 'survivor' is, therefore, defined as an individual who personally survived acts of gross human rights violations against him/her and who was able to testify at the TRC. The term 'victim' refers to a close relative of someone who did not survive an act or acts of gross human rights violations who testified at the TRC on behalf of the person who was violated. This, however, creates a moral dilemma of who has the right to forgive. In order to overcome this, it is assumed that those referred to as 'victims' have the right to forgive those responsible for gross human rights violations committed against loved ones by virtue of the fact that they (victims) suffered as a result of the violations. An example of this would be a mother whose ability to provide adequate care for her children was hampered by the disappearance of her husband. These individuals, on granting forgiveness, are, therefore, assumed to have done so on behalf of themselves.

3.4. Gross human rights violations

Past conflicts resulted in numerous acts of human rights violations both by those who defended Apartheid and those who opposed it. These ranged from killing people to denying them their rights. Unfortunately, the TRC could not deal with all the human rights violations that occurred. For this reason, it focussed only on serious violations or gross human rights violations. Within the context of the TRC, gross human rights violations thus encompassed killings, abductions,

torture and severe ill treatment. This study does not deviate from this and employs the same definition.

4. Sampling

The sampling procedures employed in the study occurred in a manner that is consistent with qualitative research methodology. According to Patton (1990) qualitative inquiry typically focuses in depth on relatively small samples, even single cases. In contrast to quantitative research where representativeness and generalizability are of paramount importance, qualitative sampling is driven by the desire to illuminate the questions under investigation and to increase the scope or range of data exposed – to uncover multiple realities (Kuzel, 1992). It, therefore, tends to be purposive rather than random. As is the case with the general methodology of qualitative research, “Samples in qualitative studies are usually not wholly prespecified, but can evolve once field work begins” (Miles & Huberman, 1994, p. 27). It is thus characterized by a significant degree of flexibility.

4.1. Accessing participants

Accessing participants for the study involved a number of steps. Access was initiated by contacting the local TRC office in order to request transcripts of the victims hearings that had occurred in East London and surrounding areas. The main purpose of this was not only to identify suitable participants, but also to verify their suitability in terms of the selection criteria set out below. In addition to using the transcripts, suitable participants were also identified through acquaintances as well as the extensive media coverage that some individual cases received. The next step was to make contact with those identified as suitable for the study. The

sampling method used was thus what Patton (1990) refers to as 'criterion' sampling, i.e. which identifies and uses those cases that meet some criterion.

4.2. Selection criteria

Five participants were selected to take part in the study with the following selection criteria applying:

- Three of the participants should have been survivors of human rights abuses, with the remaining two being victims of human rights abuses;
- No restriction was placed on where violations took place;
- The participants had to have testified at the *Truth and Reconciliation Commission's* hearings in East London and surrounding areas for victims and survivors of human rights violations and most importantly;
- They must have expressed willingness at the hearings to forgive those who were responsible for their pain and suffering.

4.3. Profile of interview participants

All of the five participants resided in the East London and surrounding areas at the time of the violation. Two of the participants were female, with the other three being male. Three were Xhosa first language speakers, one was an English first language speaker, while the remaining participant was an Afrikaans first language speaker. All of the participants had a good command of spoken English. Three of the participants were survivors and two were victims. The racial breakdown of the participants were three historically African, one White and one historically Coloured participant. A profile of the interview participants is presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Profile of interview participants

Participant	Gender	Race	Capacity	Testimony Venue	Interview Date
1	Male	Black	Survivor	East London	10. 09. 98
2	Male	Black	Survivor	Mdantsane	09. 10. 98
3	Female	White	Survivor	East London	30. 10. 98
4	Male	Coloured	Victim	Mdantsane	03. 11. 98
5	Female	Black	Victim	East London	25. 07. 98

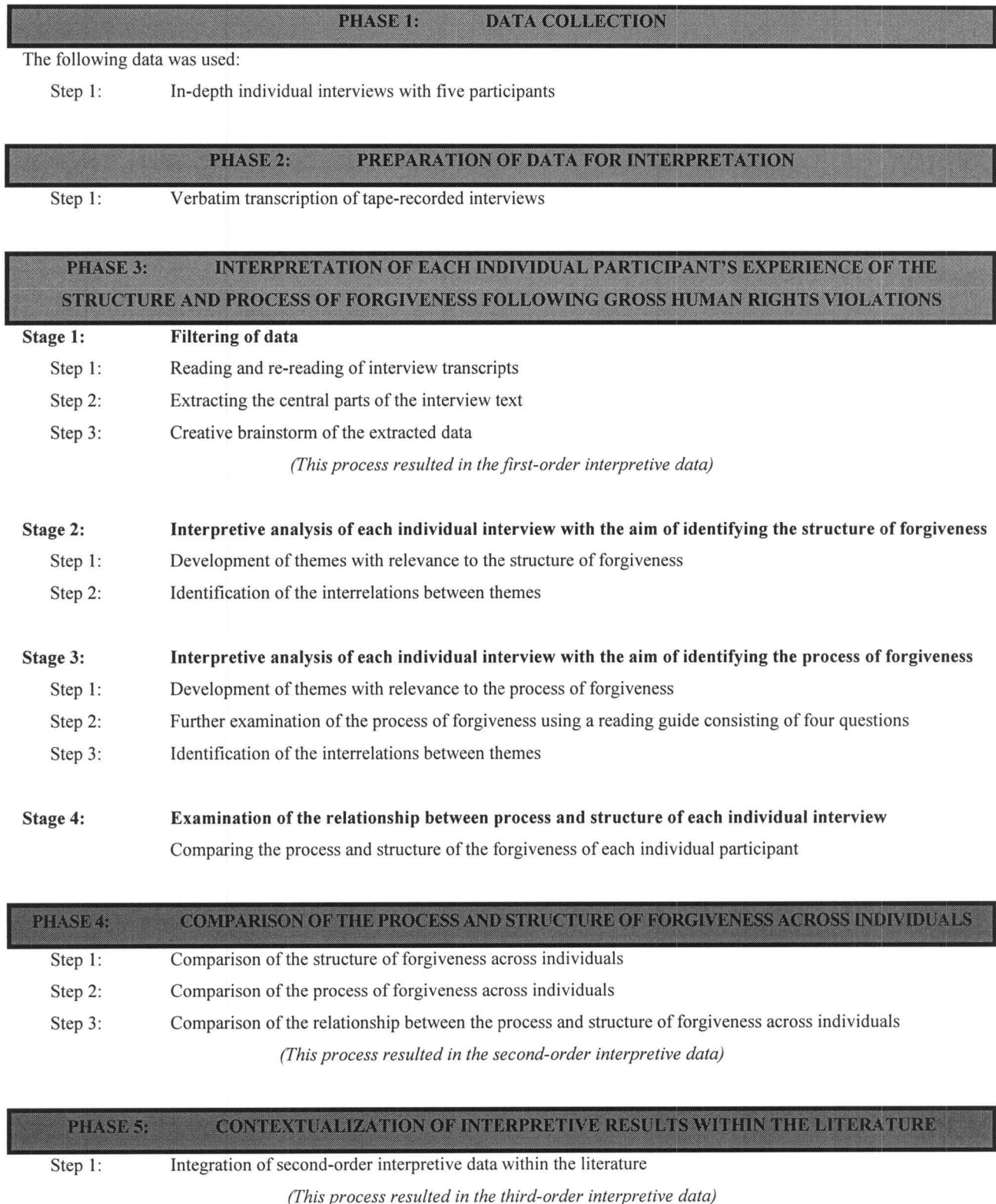
5. The research design

The research design encompasses three main components:

- An investigation into the structure of forgiveness of both victims and survivors of gross human rights violations.
- An investigation into the process of forgiveness of both victims and survivors of gross human rights violations.
- The relationship between the structure and process of forgiveness following gross human rights violations.

A schematic representation of the research process is presented in Figure 1. This is followed by a detailed explanation of each of the steps in the design. Where it is deemed appropriate, examples of the results of the steps are provided in the appendices for clarifying purposes.

Figure 1. Schematic representation of the research design



5.1. PHASE 1: DATA COLLECTION

Step 1: In-depth interviews with the five participants

Data collection took place by means of qualitative unstructured interviews, which were conducted with each participant. The choice of data collection method was motivated by its consistency with the ontological and epistemological position of the study. The main aim of the interviews was to determine how the participants experienced forgiveness toward those who violated their human rights. More specifically, it was aimed at eliciting the following information:

- How the forgiveness process experienced by the participants proceeded from the time of the violation to the stage when they expressed forgiveness towards the perpetrators;
- What forgiveness means to the participants, in other words, what are the elements or components of forgiveness;
- Whether there is a relationship between the structure and process of forgiveness.

5.2. PHASE 2: PREPARATION OF DATA FOR INTERPRETATION

Step 1: Verbatim transcription of tape-recorded interviews

Each interview was tape recorded and prepared for analysis by means of verbatim transcription. The transcribed texts of each interview constituted the units of analysis. As all the interviews were conducted in English, no translations were required.

5.3. PHASE 3: INTERPRETATION OF EACH INDIVIDUAL PARTICIPANT'S STRUCTURE AND PROCESS OF FORGIVENESS FOLLOWING GROSS HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS

5.3.1 Stage 1: The filtering of the data

Following Van Vlaenderen (1997), data analysis occurred by means of a multi-layered interpretive process in order to allow for deep interpretation and the uncovering of underlying meaning. The first stage of the interpretive-analytical process aimed to unravel the text into their basic units of analysis for purpose of enhancing the emergence of meaning from the data (see Figure 1, Phase 3, Stage 1). This process yielded what Neuman (1997) refers to as 'first-order interpretive data'.

Step 1: Reading and re-reading of interview transcripts

In this step, each verbatim-transcribed interview was read and re-read to enhance familiarity with its content. At various stages during this process, the tape-recorded interviews were revisited in order to get a better understanding of the context in which certain extracts of the conversation were embedded. During this step, the researcher also made theoretical memos in order to make a conceptually coherent sense of what was happening. Theoretical memos are primarily for conceptual intent (Miles and Huberman, 1994). "They don't just report data: they tie together different pieces of data into a recognizable cluster, often to show that those data are instances of a general concept" (p. 72). For these reasons, theoretical memos are one of the most effective sense-making tools available.

Step 2: Extracting the central parts of the interview text

This step entailed a filtering process, which was accomplished by extracting the central parts of the interview text. Those aspects of the texts that had absolutely no relevance to either the structure or process of forgiveness were eliminated. Decisions on the extraction process were based not only on the semantic relevance of words or phrases, but also on their contextual relevance. This was done in order to guard against the elimination of phrases which, at first glance, did not seem unquestionably relevant, but which were otherwise relevant once consideration was given to the context in which they were used. (An example of the extraction process for one interview transcript is provided in Appendix 1).

Step 3: Creative brainstorming of extracted data

In this step, the extracted data was subjected to a creative brainstorming session. This involved writing down the various possible meanings of each individual word or phrase in the extracted data. Meanings of words and phrases were derived from several sources. These include the semantic value of words and phrases by means of a thesaurus, the context in which they were used and the researcher's conjunctive experiential knowledge. This brainstorming session was intended to prepare the researcher for Stages 2 and 3 of the interpretive analytical process. (In Appendix 2 an example of the brainstorming session of one interview is provided).

5.3.2. Stage 2: Interpretive analysis of each individual interview with the aim of identifying the structure of forgiveness

Stages 2-4 of Phase 3, as well as Phase 4, are consistent with what Geertz (1973) calls 'applying thick descriptions'. Both Denzin (1994) and Vidich and Lyman (1994) view this practice as indispensable to qualitative research as it paves the way for the generation of what they refer to as 'thick interpretations'. Similarly, Schwandt (1994) states that the 'application of thick descriptions, as an essential hermeneutical practice, enables the researcher to elicit and interpret the meaning of lived experience. Neuman (1997) refers to the researcher's discovery and reconstruction of first-order interpretive data as 'second-order interpretation', because the researcher comes in from the outside to discover what occurred. During these stages, the researcher elicits an underlying coherence or sense of meaning in the data. "Because meaning develops within a set of other meanings, not in a vacuum, a second-order interpretation places the human action being studied in the 'stream of behaviour' or events to which it is related – its context" (Neuman, 1997, p.335).

Step 1: The development of themes with relevance to the structure of forgiveness

Prepared by the brainstorm data, themes with relevance to the structure of forgiveness were gleaned. Theme generation was guided by what each individual participant considered to be, in terms of his/her experience, the definition of forgiveness, in other words what does it mean for the participant to forgive another person. This process involved meticulously screening the brainstormed data a number of times with the explicit purpose of identifying themes that relate to the definition that forgiveness has for

each individual participant. Themes were provided with conceptual labels and the indicators (verbatim words and phrases of the participant) they referred to were noted. The indicators were compared in order to refine or adjust the themes. (An example of this step is provided in Appendix 3)

Step 2: Identification of the inter-relations between themes

- An examination of the different themes and the contexts in which they emerged, suggested that some themes occur in relation to other themes or that one theme is regarded as a precondition for the emergence of another theme. For example, the emergence of the TRUTH and the need for FACE-TO-FACE CONTACT with the perpetrator were two themes that were identified in the structure of forgiveness of Participant One. Further contextual examination of the indicators of these themes suggests that FACE-TO-FACE CONTACT is regarded as a precondition for the emergence of the TRUTH. The aim of this step was, therefore, to identify the inter-relations between the various themes that were developed in Step 1 of the current stage. (see Appendix 4 for an example of Step 2). The results of Phase 3, Stage 2 will be discussed in detail in the next chapter.

5.3.3. Stage 3: Interpretive analysis of each individual interview with the aim of identifying the process of forgiveness

Step 1: Development of themes with relevance to the process of forgiveness

From the remaining brainstorm data, themes with relevance to the process of forgiveness were gleaned. Theme generation was guided by what each individual participant considered to be the process he/she underwent in order to arrive at what was for him/her the definition of real forgiveness. In other words, this process was aimed at tracing the various changes that the participant underwent in relation to the perpetrator/s from the moment that the violation was committed up until the participant decided to forgive the perpetrator/s. In order to gain optimal benefit from this exercise, the brainstormed data was meticulously screened a number of times with the explicit purpose of identifying themes that relates to the process of forgiveness. Themes were provided with a conceptual label and the indicators (verbatim words and phrases of the participant) they referred to, were noted. The indicators were compared in order to refine or adjust the themes. (An example of this step is provided in Appendix 5).

Step 2: Further examination of the process of forgiveness using a reading guide consisting of four questions

Themes developed in the previous step were those that related directly to the process of forgiveness. The researcher, however, felt that there were themes that indirectly shed light on the process that individual participants went through as they journeyed towards forgiveness. These themes mainly derived their significance from the context in which forgiveness were granted, i.e. forgiveness following gross human rights violations which were committed in a political context. An example of this would be the role that the TRC played in motivating or assisting with the forgiveness process of some of the participants. Thus, in order to accommodate these themes and enhance the interpretation of the process of forgiveness, a reading guide was applied to the remaining brainstormed data.

According to Mergendollar (1989) the reading guide method of textual interpretation aims to extricate those features of the text, which clarify the meaning of a text. Brown, Tappan, Gilligan, Miller and Argyris (1989) argue that the reading guide offers one way of operationalizing, in a systematic and deliberate manner, the paradoxical hermeneutic circle. It is, therefore, a grounded hermeneutical tool (Addison, 1992). Van Vlaenderen (1997) asserts that the reading guide essentially involves generating a set of questions through which the data are read. As a consequence it brings an order to and facilitates the exploration of the data.

The questions in the reading guide generated additional themes. As in the previous step, these were provided with conceptual labels and the indicators (verbatim words and phrases of the participant) they referred to, were noted. The indicators were compared in order to refine or adjust the themes. (An example of this step appears in Appendix 6). The first reading guide consisted of four questions. These questions are provided in Appendix 8. The research question and the researcher's fore-structure determined the content of this reading guide.

Step 3: Identification of the inter-relations between themes

An examination of the different themes and the contexts in which they emerged, suggested that themes were related. For example, ACCEPTANCE of the violation appears to be contingent on the need for UNDERSTANDING why the act was committed, as well as the desire for EXPLAINING in the case of Participant One. The aim of this step was, therefore, to identify the inter-relations between the various themes

that were developed in Step 1 and 2 of the current stage. (See Appendix 7 for an example of Step 3). The results of Phase 3, Stage 3 will be discussed in detail in the next chapter.

5.3.4. Stage 4: Examination of the relationship between the process and structure of forgiveness of each individual participant

Step 1: Comparing the process and structure of forgiveness of each individual participant

This stage was aimed at explicating the relationship between the process and structure of the forgiveness of each individual participant. In order to achieve this, a second reading guide consisting of the following question was posed to the themes that were generated for each individual participant in Stages 2 and 3. ‘Are there any links, positive or negative, between each of the individual structure themes and the process themes for each individual participant?’ This question was based on its ability to most adequately achieve the aim of the above-mentioned stage. In order to refine this process, attention had to be paid to the context in which indicators that represented the different themes, were used. Notes about possible relationships and interactions between themes that the researcher made during the transcription and the initial stages in the interpretive analytical process was used to compliment this. A detailed discussion of the results of this stage is provided in the next chapter.

5.4. PHASE 4: COMPARISON OF THE PROCESS AND STRUCTURE OF FORGIVENESS ACROSS INDIVIDUALS

Whereas the previous phase entailed examining the structure and process of forgiveness of each individual participant, the current phase involved examining the structure and process of forgiveness across the study participants. A discussion of the results of this Phase is provided in Chapter 7.

Step 1: Comparison of the structure of forgiveness across individuals

In this step, the structure of forgiveness was compared across all of the participants. This was done, firstly, by noting all the various themes that were identified for all the participants in Phase 3, Stage 2. Secondly, during this process, it was further noted that the participants had some themes in common while other themes were unique to a single participant. In order to refine this comparison process, how the participants construed themes they had in common, were examined. For example, TRUTH as a theme was identified as common to all five participants. At the same time, the participants had different reasons for attaching significance to the TRUTH. For Participant Five truth was regarded as a precondition for forgiveness, whereas the significance of truth for Participant One lied in its capacity to make the forgiveness process easier. Participants Two, Three and Four on the other hand, perceived truth as a precondition for closure.

Step 2: Comparison of the process of forgiveness across individuals

In this step, the process of forgiveness was explored across all of the participants. Here, the method used in the previous step was basically duplicated. The various themes that were identified in Phase 3, Stage 3 were written down. It was noted that the participants had some themes in common while other themes were unique to a single participant. In order to refine this comparison process, how the participants construed themes they had in common was examined.

Step 3: Comparison of the relationship between the process and structure of forgiveness across individuals

Step 3 involved comparing the results of the structure-process relationships of the five participants that was yielded in Phase 3, stage 4. In order to achieve this, the various structure-process relationships generated in Stage 4 of the previous phase were carefully examined with the aim of identifying common relationships across the various participants. A discussion of the results of this process is provided in Chapter 7. In this discussion, each individual structure theme is discussed in relation to the various process themes to which it appears to be connected.

5.5. PHASE 5: CONTEXTUALIZATION OF INTERPRETIVE RESULTS WITHIN THE LITERATURE

Phase 5 of the interpretive-analytical process involved a higher order of interpretation.

Step 1: Integration of second-order interpretive data within the literature

Whereas the first and second-order interpretations were aimed at gaining an understanding of the significance that forgiveness had for the study participants, third-order interpretation went even further. This was done by assigning general theoretical significance to second-order interpretive data by contextualizing it (second-order interpretive data) within the theoretical literature on forgiveness. The results of this Phase are discussed in Chapter 8.

6. Ethical issues in qualitative interviewing

This section focuses on the issue of ethics in qualitative interviewing. This is largely necessitated by the sensitive nature of the study and the potential harm that the study could cause to the participants. The use of the qualitative interview as a data collection technique raises a number of general ethical concerns. These are vast and complete discussion of all will extend beyond the scope of this study. This discussion will, therefore, be limited to the main ethical considerations that emerged during the interviewing stage of the study.

6.1. Informed consent

According to Kvale (1996), informed consent entails informing the research participants about the overall purpose of the investigation and the main features of the research design, as well as of any possible risks and benefits that might result from participation in the research project. Informed consent further requires obtaining voluntary participation of the subject, with the full understanding that he/she may withdraw from the study at any given time. This is aimed at counteracting undue influence and potential coercion. This ethical imperative gains added

importance in sensitive situations where participation in a project poses potential risks to the well-being of the participant (Manson, 1996). Due to the sensitive nature of the study, the researcher was, therefore, under obligation to adhere to the above-mentioned ethical consideration.

In order to dispel any fears or concerns that participants had, the researcher attempted to explain to them in non-technical terms which they were able to understand, what the purpose of the study was and how it might affect them. Participant One in particular had concerns regarding the potential commercial value of the study. He was satisfied after the researcher explained that the study is conducted purely for academic purposes. Participants were warned that the researcher would require of them to answer questions related to the trauma that they experienced and that this might cause them distress. It was further explained to each participant that the interview would be terminated upon his/her request. During the interview with Participant Five, the researcher decided to terminate the interview when it became apparent that the participant was experiencing distress to the extent that she had to excuse herself several times. Some of the participants were not aware of their rights and the researcher felt obliged to outline these and remind the participants of these rights throughout the interview.

6.2. Confidentiality

Kvale (1996) further argues for the confidentiality of the research participant to be respected. Confidentiality means that any private data that may compromise the participants' identity will be removed from the research report. Kvale (1996), however, proceeds to warn that a participant's right to privacy is not without dilemma. The main concern is about what information would be made available and to whom. It, therefore, becomes imperative to make clear before the interview who will have access to the research report.

Participants were warned that, given the public nature of their testimony at the TRC, total anonymity could not be totally guaranteed. At the same time, they were given the assurance that any identifying information would be removed from the study. Whereas Participant Three was indifferent regarding the issue of anonymity, the remaining participants insisted on the protection of their identities. Participants were further informed that, due to the academic nature of the study, little restriction would be placed on who will have access to the research report. All the participants were satisfied with the explanations given by the researcher.

CHAPTER 6.

THE STRUCTURE AND PROCESS OF FORGIVENESS AS EXPERIENCED BY EACH INDIVIDUAL PARTICIPANT

1. Introduction

This chapter presents the results of the exploration into each individual participant's structure and process of forgiveness following gross human rights violations, i.e. Phase 3 of the interpretive process. At the beginning of each discussion, a description of the relevant participant's expression of forgiveness at the TRC will be given as well as aspects that relate to the context in which forgiveness was granted. This will then be followed by a discussion of the participant's structure and process of forgiveness as well as the relationship between the structure and process of that participant. (For a profile of each participant, see Table 2 in Chapter 5).

It has to be borne in mind that the interval between each participant's appearance at the TRC and the interviews conducted by the researcher, was at least one year. There was, thus, the possibility that a participant could have changed his/her attitude on forgiveness towards those that were responsible for the gross violation of their human rights. This is in fact what happened in the case of Participant Five. The manner in which the results of this participant's experience are to be discussed will, therefore, deviate from the manner in which the experiences of the remaining participants will be discussed. Although a clear structure and process of forgiveness failed to emerge from the interview with Participant Five, some interesting aspects relating to what forgiveness might be as well as why this participant is unable to forgive, were illuminated.

2. Participant One

2.1 Context of the act of forgiveness

Participant One is a survivor of gross human rights violations. At the time of the violation, he was a trade union activist and he was also involved in ANC activities. The participant felt that, as a member of the oppressed majority, he had the responsibility of fighting racial oppression and discrimination. He willingly dedicated his life towards this end. In 1988, while busy with ANC activities, the participant, along with other comrades, was ambushed by what was believed to be the then Ciskei Security Forces. Two people, including the participant's girlfriend who was not an ANC activist, were killed in the attack. No one was ever arrested for the attack, nor has any one accepted responsibility at the TRC.

This participant testified that he has forgiven those who were responsible for the violation. He has accepted what happened to him. He does not regret his involvement in the liberation struggle and stated that, as a soldier, he was always conscious of the fact that he might be targeted by the forces he was fighting.

What follows is the structure and process of his forgiveness experience as well as the relationship between the two.

2.2. The structure of forgiveness

With regards to structure (Phase 3, Stage 2, Step 1), the following themes were identified. The themes as well as examples of the indicators that reveal the themes appear in Table 3.

Although forgiveness has been granted, THE PHYSICAL AND PSYCHOLOGICAL EFFECTS of the violation remain PRESENT. FORGIVING IS NOT tantamount to FORGETTING.

Forgiving means that one must adopt an attitude of NON-VENGEANCE towards perpetrators of the violation. The emergence of the TRUTH is also important. The truth relates specifically to the identification of the perpetrator so as to know who specifically to direct forgiveness to. It is important to have FACE-TO-FACE CONTACT with the person towards whom forgiveness is directed, as this will make forgiving easier. The forgiver has to be COMMITTED TOWARDS FORGIVING.

The following interactions or inter-relations among themes were also noted (Phase 3, Stage 2, Step 2):

- THE PRESENCE OF THE EFFECTS AFTER FORGIVENESS has been granted, underlies the fact that FORGIVENESS IS NOT FORGETTING.
- This, however, does not deter from the fact that there is a COMMITMENT TOWARDS FORGIVING.
- FACE -TO-FACE CONTACT facilitates the emergence of the TRUTH.
- NON-VENGEANCE is promoted by one's COMMITMENT TOWARDS FORGIVENESS.
- NON-VENGEANCE AND COMMITMENT TOWARDS FORGIVENESS does not imply that the search for the TRUTH has been abandoned.

Table 3. Themes and indicators (the verbatim words of the participant) related to the structure of forgiveness of Participant One.

THEMES	INDICATORS
PRESENCE OF EFFECTS AFTER FORGIVENESS	No, I will never heal fully. The bullet in my back can't come out and my leg, I've got broken bones and nerves were severed. But there is only one thing that the TRC will never do, it is what happened to me. You know that they cannot take away.
FORGIVENESS IS NOT FORGETTING	Whenever somebody interviews me about this, at times, I feel like crying, because I still remember that day. But, you know, to forgive and to reconcile is easy but I can forgive, but I cannot forget.
NON-VENGEFULNESS	Not to resort to such things as revenge and all that. Not that I was going to do this and that.
FACE-TO-FACE CONTACT	I cannot reconcile in a vacuum. I was happy that I was going to see who these people are. That I was going to see them. But I want to see those people so that I can say, A-B-C and D.
TRUTH	It would then also be easier for me to forgive, you understand, because then I know who specifically to forgive. They are going to be seen by everyone and that will satisfy the community as well.
COMMITMENT TOWARDS FORGIVING	But the bottomline is that I have forgiven.

2.3. The process of forgiveness

The following themes with regard to the process of forgiveness were identified (Phase 3, Stage 3, Step 1). The themes as well as examples of the indicators that reveal the themes appear in Table 4.

Given the nature of the violation, forgiveness was experienced as an UNFOLDING PROCESS that took time. The journey towards forgiveness was characterized by what was perceived to be LEGITIMATE ANGER because his girlfriend was killed although she was innocent. PAIN also formed an integral part of the process as did other NEGATIVE EMOTIONS such as resentment. As a parent, one is plagued by the FEAR that, because of the physical affects of the attack, one

would not be able to provide for one's children. The process of forgiveness was further characterized by the need to gain UNDERSTANDING into the act for which forgiveness is granted. This relates not only to the need to know and understand the reasons for the attack, but also to know and understand what one did to deserve to be violated. There is also the need to give EXPLANATIONS if the perpetrators required any. Explaining to perpetrators why one was resisting Apartheid is aimed at justifying one's involvement in the liberation struggle and at the same time convince the perpetrators of the immoral nature of Apartheid. This might make the perpetrators realize how misconceived their beliefs were and possibly deter them from committing the same acts again. ACCEPTANCE, to the extent that one is able to live a productive life despite the presence of the effects of the violation, was also significant of the forgiveness process.

Table 4. Themes and indicators (the verbatim words of the participant) related to the process of forgiveness of Participant One

THEMES	INDICATORS
FORGIVENESS AS UNFOLDING	To forgive is not an easy thing. It takes time, especially with what happened to me, you understand.
LEGITIMATE ANGER	Because I am suppose to have resentment to those who have done this to me, and of course, my fiancé, she died in that process you know. I was very angry.
ACCEPTANCE	It has made me to be comfortable, not to be comfortable, materially, by giving me money and such things. But in the sense that I am able to live what happened and carry on with my life.
PAIN	I felt pain. Sometimes I feel like crying.
UNDERSTANDING	But if those people are brought to me, they can give me the reason as to why they have done this and then I would have inside information as to what happened and why it happened. They will be able to tell me what I have done wrong, you understand, for them to do such a thing to me.
EXPLANATIONS	I can also answer them, and then I can forgive and reconcile.
NEGATIVE EMOTIONS	I had a lot of anger and resentment.
FEARS	I'm also thinking about my children.

The following themes are the results of further investigation into the participant's process of forgiveness by means of a reading guide. (Phase 3, Stage 3, Step 2). The reading guide questions are provided and the themes that were identified in response to the questions are discussed.

What motivates one to forgive?

THE CREDIBILITY OF THE TRC and POLITICAL INSIGHT into the violation motivated the participant to forgive. The fact that comrades, who were with him in the liberation struggle, were part of the TRC gave the Commission credibility. Testifying gave him a sense that genuine efforts were made to heal the wounds of the past in a way that the dignity of those who suffered is restored. His confidence in the TRC is demonstrated by his belief that the Commission should become involved in other disputes. He further believes that the TRC is the only way towards reconciliation and he is convinced that South Africa would have been in a state of civil unrest had it not been for the TRC. He whole-heartedly endorses the Commission's principle of non-vengeance. He believes that vengeance should be guarded against, as this is exactly what is responsible for civil wars in other African countries after they gained independence.

This discourse is strongly informed by a political perspective, that is the political ideology of the ANC, which the participant firmly supports. Given the ANC's significant decision making powers regarding the nature of the Commission (see Chapter 2, Section 4.4.) it is, therefore, understandable that the participant will endorse the TRC and support its calls for forgiveness and reconciliation.

What assists this process?

The forgiveness process was assisted by the availability of a SUPPORT NETWORK. The participant refers specifically to the support that he was offered during his TRC testimony, not only from the commissioners but from the people taking statements as well. The fact that COMPENSATION was promised also aided the forgiveness process. This would contribute towards alleviating fears

What causes change?

THE TRC served AS CATALYST FOR CHANGE. The participant credits the Commission for helping him to deal with his experience in a constructive way, to the extent that he is able to carry on with his life. The TRC has also changed the attitudes of his friends who were skeptical at first and questioned his decision to testify, but has since realized not only the value of the Commission, but also the fact that forgiveness and reconciliation is the only way forward.

What causes pain?

THE EFFECTS OF THE VIOLATION caused the participant intense physical and psychological pain. The participant still suffers from severe physical pain as a result of bullets that are lodged in his spine. He also suffered emotional pain due to the fact that he lost his girlfriend in the attack.

The following inter-relations between the different themes were identified (Phase 3, Stage3, Step 3):

- ACCEPTANCE is contingent upon UNDERSTANDING and EXPLAINING.

- A SUPPORT NETWORK reduces the EFFECTS OF THE VIOLATION.
- PAIN as well as THE EFFECTS OF THE VIOLATION results in LEGITIMATE ANGER.
- A SUPPORT NETWORK facilitates ACCEPTANCE and UNDERSTANDING.
- THE CREDIBILITY OF THE TRC is enhanced by the POLITICAL INSIGHT of the individual.
- COMPENSATION provides relief for FEARS that are experienced.

2.4. The relationship between the structure and process of forgiveness

The following relationships between the process and structural themes were identified (Phase 3, Stage 4, Step 1 of the interpretive analytical process):

PAIN was experienced due to the constant PRESENCE OF THE PHYSICAL EFFECTS OF THE ATTACK. Initially, this led to an increase in the FEARS that the participant was experiencing. The PRESENCE OF THE EFFECTS OF THE ATTACK was also responsible for the ANGER AND NEGATIVE EMOTIONS that the participant originally had. PAIN and FEARS about his health made FORGETTING difficult. NON-VENGEANCE as well as COMMITMENT TOWARDS FORGIVENESS was facilitated by the participant's POLITICAL INSIGHT and THE CREDIBILITY OF THE TRC. FACE-TO-FACE CONTACT enabled him to EXPLAIN and answer questions. Obtaining the TRUTH led to UNDERSTANDING and ACCEPTANCE. The PAIN that was suffered enhanced the DESIRE for the TRUTH.

3. Participant Two

3.1. Context of the act of forgiveness

This participant is a survivor of gross human rights violations. He became politically active at high school. As an adult, he became a leading political figure in the East London area. He was detained under the State of Emergency in 1986 in Duncan Village and was incarcerated at the Fort Glamorgan Prison. While in prison, he suffered severe torture. Because of this as well as dissatisfaction over the harsh condition in which they were kept, the political leaders in prison, who were separated from the ordinary comrades, decided to embark on a hunger strike. As a consequence of this, the participant became ill. He was taken to the local hospital where he was prescribed a dangerous chemical. Instructions were also given as to how the chemical was to be applied. Unfortunately, the prison medical officer that was suppose to apply the chemical was not present when instructions were given and was not interested in following any instructions. As a consequence, when the participant was returned to prison, the chemical was wrongly applied, even to the genital area of the participant. This resulted in him suffering from excruciating pains as a result of the injuries that the chemical caused to his genital area. Requests to return to the hospital were subsequently refused.

The participant expressed forgiveness towards the medical officer who was responsible for the injuries he sustained and the resultant suffering he had to endure. His expression of forgiveness at the TRC was based on his commitment towards reconciliation. He views the violation that he suffered as his contribution towards the struggle for democracy. He also agrees with the principle of amnesty for perpetrators. He is confident that when the TRC grants amnesty, those who receive it will deserve it. What follows is the structure and process of his forgiveness experience as well as the relationship between the two.

3.2. The structure of forgiveness

With regards to structure (Phase 3, Stage 2, Step 1), the themes below were identified. The themes as well as examples of the indicators that reveal the themes appear in Table 5.

Forgiveness can't remove the PRESENCE OF THE PHYSICAL EFFECTS OF THE VIOLATION. This further implies that FORGIVING IS NOT FORGETTING. Forgiveness is essentially about NON-VENGEANCE. It is also about NON-BITTERNESS. The decision to forgive is driven by the desire for CLOSURE. The emergence of the TRUTH, both from the side of the perpetrators as well as the victims/survivors, is essential. The perpetrator should explain the reason for his action, especially since he was in the profession of helping those who suffer from physical injuries. This is also the reason why the TRC has focussed its attention on those who facilitated the occurrence of gross human rights violations. These include those in the judiciary and especially members of the medical profession who actively took part, both by commission and omission, in acts of torture and whose expert testimony in the courts also resulted in perpetrators of gross human rights violations being declared innocent.

Table 5. Themes and indicators (the verbatim words of the participant) related to the structure of forgiveness of Participant Two

THEMES	INDICATORS
PRESENCE OF THE PHYSICAL EFFECTS AFTER FORGIVENESS	Physically I will also never be healed, you know. Forgiveness can't take the physical wounds away.
FORGIVING IS NOT FORGETTING	You feel satisfied that you can carry on with your life, but this does not mean that you have forgotten what happened. I don't think I will ever forget.
NON-VENGEANCE	But I don't want any revenge.
NON-BITTERNESS	But I don't have any grudges.
TRUTH	It is important to come forward and tell the truth of what happened from both sides.
CLOSURE	As I said, I only want answers so that I can close this book.

The following interactions or inter-relations among themes were also noted (Phase 3, Stage 2, Step 2):

- THE PRESENCE OF THE PHYSICAL EFFECTS of the violation AFTER FORGIVENESS has been granted, underlies the fact that FORGIVING IS NOT FORGETTING.
- NON-BITTERNESS facilitates NON-VENGEANCE.
- The TRUTH promotes feelings of NON-VENGEANCE and NON-BITTERNESS.
- CLOSURE is contingent on the emergence of the TRUTH.

3.3. The process of forgiveness

The following themes with regard to the process were identified (Phase 3, Stage 3, Step 1): The themes as well as examples of the indicators that reveal the themes appear in Table 6.

FORGIVENESS was experienced AS AN UNFOLDING PROCESS that took a considerable amount of time. It included a significant amount of PAIN. The beginning was characterized by what was perceived to be LEGITIMATE ANGER. The participant believed that he was fighting for a legitimate cause. For this reason, there was a SENSE OF UNFAIRNESS of the violation. Other NEGATIVE EMOTIONS and THOUGHTS such as sadness were also experienced. The process of forgiveness was saturated with questions that are aimed at gaining an UNDERSTANDING as to the motives of perpetrators. The fact that the participant was seriously injured and might need specialist treatment in the future, generated FEAR because of the potential financial costs involved. At some stage he felt like GIVING UP, mainly because of self-pity and an inability to adequately deal with the situation. He gradually realized that he had to RELY ON HIMSELF to take control of his life. There was a clear stage during the forgiveness

Table 6. Themes and indicators related to the process of forgiveness of Participant Two.

THEMES	INDICATORS
FORGIVENESS AS AN UNFOLDING PROCESS	It was not an easy process because I did not wake up one day and decided that I should forgive. Forgiving is not a onetime thing it was a process.
LEGITIMATE ANGER	Well, I was very angry because I was fighting for a legitimate cause.
SENSE OF UNFAIRNESS	And they had no right to do what they did to me. You know you ask yourself what did I do to deserve this and I think that is a problem because it gets you nowhere
ACCEPTANCE	I decided to put this thing behind me and carry on with my life and not be a prisoner because of what happened. But afterwards I realized that we have fought hard and long and we have finally won.
ONSET	Then the changes happened. I was not miserable anymore.
EMPATHY	Maybe they were forced or maybe they believed what they were doing was right.
PAIN	Well, it was very painful and difficult. My family also began to suffer because I was miserable.
UNDERSTANDING	I would like to know why they did this to me. There are also a lot of questions I have for the doctors How could they allow this to happen? I only want them to explain why and then maybe I will understand better.
FOCUS ON THE POSITIVE	I think it's important to concentrate on the future. Especially when I think where we are now and where we were ten years ago.
MEANING IN SUFFERING	There are other times when I feel that at least I did not suffer for nothing. So we cant stop now otherwise all the suffering would have been for nothing. Then my suffering will be for nothing and I wanted it to mean something.
POLITICAL INSIGHT	I then tried to think of this in terms of politics. Because it made me realize that this was part of the struggle and that there will be more of this, but that we should not give up.
SELF-RELIANCE	And then things started to change and I also realized that I would have to deal with this by myself because no one will help me.
NEGATIVE EMOTIONS, THOUGHTS	I was filled with hatred and I was also sad.
GIVING UP	There was a time when I wanted to kill myself.
FEARS	I still don't know how serious my injuries are. I don't have money to see a specialist to find out. So it is possible that it is far worse.

process when the participant realized that he was changing in his attitude towards the perpetrators. This was the ONSET of forgiveness. Characteristic of this stage was the shift from negative thoughts and emotions to FOCUS ON THE POSITIVE ones and to appreciate the political situation now compared to what it was ten years ago. Once a decision was made to assume proper control, the participant began to ACCEPT what had happened and to carry on with his life. The need for understanding lead to increased EMPATHY with the perpetrators. It could be possible that the perpetrators were forced to commit the acts or maybe they believed their actions were justified. Forgiveness was further promoted by the desire to find MEANING IN THE SUFFERING that was endured. The participant felt that the violation he suffered was meaningful. Gaining POLITICAL INSIGHT into the violation further advanced the process of forgiveness. One begins to view the violation as a political act and not as a personal vendetta. This does not mean that one seeks to justify the violation, but rather that one begins to move closer to understanding why the violation took place.

The following themes are the results of further investigation into the participant's process of forgiveness by means of a reading guide. (Phase 3, Stage 3, Step 2). The reading guide questions are provided and the themes that were identified in response to the questions are discussed.

What motivates one to forgive?

A number of factors motivated the participant to forgive. These include his perception of the TRC AS A CREDIBLE INSTITUTION and his commitment towards certain PHILOSOPHICAL PRINCIPLES such as the belief that the cycle of violence will have to be broken if there was ever to be peace. The participant also felt that he had AN OBLIGATION TO FORGIVE because

he has done things in his life for which he required other people's forgiveness. He was further motivated by the desire to LEAD BY EXAMPLE.

This desire was driven by the fact that the world's attention was focussed on the ANC and South Africa as a whole to see whether the same conflict that other countries experienced during their transitional periods, was going to happen in South Africa. Some, not only in the international community, but also locally, were expecting the worst. The participant, therefore, felt that South Africans, especially those who were previously oppressed, should lead the way in showing the world that there is an alternative to revenge and hatred. He is confident that despite the setbacks that were experienced, this aim has been achieved and it is something that all South Africans, both black and white can be proud of.

What assists this process?

The desire to DEAL WITH THE PAST and the participant's belief in NON-JUDGEMENT assisted the forgiveness process. He believed that it is not for him to judge others as they had their own reasons for their actions just as he had his reasons for his involvement in the liberation struggle.

What causes change?

Change is directly attributed to the TRC, WHICH SERVED AS A CATALYST, as well as the CHANGING POLITICAL SITUATION in the country. The participant had confidence in the TRC's ability to contribute to peace and reconciliation. His attitude was especially changed by

the radical changes that took place such as the unbanning of political prisoners and organizations, the first democratic elections and the subsequent victory for the ANC.

The following inter-relations between the different themes were identified (Phase 3, Stage3, Step 3):

- SELF-RELIANCE can be accomplished once the need for SELF-PITY is overcome.
- PAIN results in LEGITIMATE ANGER.
- There is a positive relationship between UNDERSTANDING and ACCEPTANCE.
- POLITICAL INSIGHT and PHILOSOPHICAL PRINCIPLES enhances UNDERSTANDING and thus increases ACCEPTANCE.
- POLITICAL INSIGHT promotes EMPATHY.
- FEARS give rise to NEGATIVE EMOTIONS, which in turn facilitates feelings of GIVING UP.
- FORGIVENESS AS AN UNFOLDING PROCESS is reinforced by the many questions that arise from the need for UNDERSTANDING.
- Perceptions of a SENSE OF UNFAIRNESS and the resultant PAIN that is suffered, increases the likelihood that ANGER is experienced as LEGITIMATE.
- FOCUS ON THE POSITIVE can reduce the need for GIVING UP.
- POLITICAL INSIGHT enhances the perception of the TRC as CREDIBLE.
- Experience of EMPATHY is increased by the OBLIGATION TO FORGIVE.
- The CHANGING POLITICAL SITUATION increases the ability to DEAL WITH THE PAST and decreases the desire to GIVE UP.
- The need to DEAL WITH THE PAST is reinforced by the desire to LEAD BY EXAMPLE.
- POLITICAL INSIGHT enables one to find MEANING IN SUFFERING.

3.4. The relationship between the structure and process of forgiveness

The following relationships between the process and structural themes were identified (Phase 3, Stage 4 of the interpretive analytical process):

The PRESENCE OF THE PHYSICAL EFFECTS OF THE ATTACK underlies the fact that forgiveness is not easy and that it is AN UNFOLDING PROCESS that takes time. It also reinforces the SENSE OF UNFAIRNESS that one experiences and facilitates feelings of GIVING UP. In addition to this, it serves to increase FEARS about the extent of physical injuries that was suffered. NON-VENGEANCE AND NON-BITTERNESS is promoted not only by the determination to LEAD BY EXAMPLE and a NON-JUDGEMENTAL ORIENTATION, but also by the need to find MEANING IN SUFFERING, PHILOSOPHICAL PRINCIPLES and the CHANGING POLITICAL SITUATION. It is further reinforced by the perception of FORGIVENESS AS AN OBLIGATION. The TRUTH facilitates UNDERSTANDING and ACCEPTANCE. The PAIN and the experience of a SENSE OF UNFAIRNESS enhance the need for the TRUTH. The need for CLOSURE is reinforced by the need for UNDERSTANDING. PRESENCE OF EFFECTS AFTER FORGIVENESS increases the need for UNDERSTANDING.

4. Participant Three

4.1. Context of the act of forgiveness

Participant Three is a survivor of gross human rights violations. She comes from a deeply religious family and grew up with an acute awareness of the injustices perpetrated by the National Party (NP) government against non-white South Africans. The participant was

attending a social function with friends in King Williams Town in the late 1980's, when Azanian People's Liberation Army (APLA) soldiers attacked them with hand grenades and AK47 rifles, claiming a number of casualties. The participant suffered numerous gunshot and shrapnel wounds. As a result of her injuries she had to undergo numerous operations. This had a devastating effect on her family, with several of her family members suffering nervous breakdowns. In addition to this, she lost her parents, in quick succession, subsequent to the attack. With the support of her family and professional help, she managed to recover to the extent that she could carry on and live a productive life. The young men who were responsible for the attack were captured. All of them received lengthy jail sentences. They successfully applied for amnesty at the TRC amnesty hearings. Subsequent to this, a meeting was arranged between the participant and the men responsible for the violation. The participant describes the meeting as a very rewarding experience as it allowed for closure.

The participant's testimony at the TRC was characterized by her expression of forgiveness towards the perpetrators and a request for their forgiveness for whatever reason. She regards the violation as an enriching experience, which, despite the negative consequences, had affected her life profoundly. She also expressed extreme optimism about the future of the country and is adamant not to follow the exodus of white South Africans from the country. She further endorsed the Commission's amnesty process.

The participant's structure and process of forgiveness was very detailed. A number of aspects could have enabled her to give such an elaborate account of what forgiveness is and the process she went through in order to arrive at that her conceptualization of what forgiveness is. The fact that the interview was conducted in her mother tongue could possibly account for her ability to express her ideas about forgiveness clearly. She also had professional help and this might have

enabled her to deal with the psychological aspects of the violation. She further had a clear understanding of the political context in which the violation took place to the extent that she was able to identify with the perpetrators and empathize with them. Her high level of education could have further enabled her to articulate her experience, ideas and beliefs clearly and elaborately.

What follows is the structure and process of her forgiveness experience as well as the relationship between the two.

4.2. The structure of forgiveness

With regards to structure (Phase 3, Stage 2, Step 1), the following themes were identified. The themes as well as examples of the indicators that reveal the themes appear in Table 7.

Forgiveness is essentially about UNCONDITIONAL LOVE for one's fellow human beings. It means recognizing the humanity of the perpetrators and loving them despite their imperfections. It is also love regardless of what their attitude towards one might be. Implicit in this, is that one must be NON-VENGEFUL towards the perpetrators. In addition to this, it is further an expression of respect for the BASIC HUMAN RIGHTS of the perpetrators. It is important to have FACE-TO-FACE CONTACT with the perpetrators when you grant forgiveness. This also includes having physical contact such as the shaking of hands as a symbolic gesture that one has genuinely forgiven. TRUTH enables you to achieve CLOSURE and also signifies the willingness to START AGAIN. This truth is related not only to knowing why the perpetrators committed the violation, but also knowing that they so believed in the cause they were fighting for that they will do it again if the circumstances were the same. Although this is difficult to come to terms with, it is, however, better to know than to constantly wonder. It is a feeling of

NON-BITTERNESS towards those responsible for the violation. AUTHENTIC FORGIVENESS comes from the heart. It is being true and honest to oneself. One, therefore, offers forgiveness only once one has resolved all the issues that prevent one from forgiving and when one is comfortable with all the requirements of forgiveness.

Table 7. Themes and indicators (the verbatim words of the participant) related to the structure of forgiveness of Participant Three.

THEMES	INDICATORS
UNCONDITIONALITY AND NON-VENGEANCE	It's unconditional love. It's totally unconditional love for fellow human beings. I never expected anything from them. I didn't expect any form of remorse or recognition.
HUMAN RIGHTS	Respect for their basic human rights.
FACE-TO-FACE CONTACT	You need that physical contact to shake hands. I think that it is important that if you forgive someone, to look him/her in the eye.
CLOSURE	That has put something to bed in my life.
VERBAL OFFERING AND STARTING AGAIN	To say 'it's over', can we start again. You are welcome at my house anytime. To say 'I'm sorry'.
NON-BITTERNESS	It's a feeling inside you of non-bitterness.
AUTHENTICITY	Forgiveness is something that comes from here (the heart). You don't have to go up there and put up a big show. You just have to be yourself and do the right thing. If I can affect other people, that's great.
TRUTH	They said that they would do it all over again. It was a hard thing to hear that it was premeditated. I knew it must have been premeditated, but when it is actually out in black and white, it's different. At the same time it gave me a tremendous sense of relief to know. Otherwise there would be this huge question mark that always hangs over the act.

The following interactions or inter-relations among themes were also noted (Phase 3, Stage 2, Step 2):

- Despite the UNCONDITIONAL NATURE OF FORGIVENESS, the TRUTH as it relates to the fact that the attack was premeditated, is difficult to come to terms with.
- FACE-TO-FACE CONTACT facilitates the emergence of the TRUTH.
- TRUTH leads to CLOSURE.

- The need for VERBAL OFFERING necessitates FACE-TO-FACE CONTACT.
- FACE-TO-FACE CONTACT facilitates CLOSURE.

4.3. The process of forgiveness

The following themes with regard to process were identified (Phase 3, Stage 3, Step 1). The themes as well as examples of the indicators that the themes represent also appear in Table 8. The forgiveness process had a clear ONSET. The participant forgave the perpetrators from the time of the violation. This allowed for the ABSENCE OF NEGATIVE EMOTIONS AND THOUGHTS such as bitterness and feeling of unfairness. Because of the extent of her injuries, she was DEPENDENT on the assistance of those close to her. This and the suffering that her family endured caused her considerable PAIN. The fact that she was dependent on her family created FEARS of being a burden. These fears were subsequently justified when the attention and care she required began to take its toll on her children. They began to question the fact that the roles were now reversed when they had to care for her whereas it was her responsibility as a parent to care for them. ANGER was experienced as LEGITIMATE. During the process she entertained feelings of GIVING UP as a result of the burden she was on her family. She gradually learned TO ACCEPT what happened. The participant also experienced CHANGE IN PRIORITIES. Whereas she was very career-orientated before the violation, she now realized that

Table 8. Themes and indicators (the verbatim words of the participant) related to the process of forgiveness of Participant Three.

THEMES	INDICATORS
FOCUS ON THE POSITIVE	I'm now more inclined to look for the positive.
CHANGE IN PRIORITIES	I'm definitely not as materialistic as I used to be.
EXPLAINING	I need them to understand that I can't help being white I need them to understand that not all white people are bad
EMPATHY	If I had been black or coloured or anything, and I had to put up with the Nationalist Government, I would have been really bitter.
POLITICAL JUSTIFICATION	If it hadn't been politically motivated, then it would have been a personal vendetta against me, then I would have been really heart sore
COMMITMENT TOWARDS FORGIVING	I would try to reconcile with that person anyway (even if the attack was not politically motivated).
UNDERSTANDING	Find out what I've done to deserve this.
GIVING UP	There were many times when I wished that they would just pull the tubes and let me go.
ONSET	I have always forgiven them from day one
ABSENCE OF NEGATIVE THOUGHTS	I have never felt any bitterness. I never felt that life was unfair.
ACCEPTANCE	It was just one of those things that happened. You've got to accept it and move forward.
DEPENDENCE	I felt so useless. I felt very bad that the roles were reversed but what could I do.
FEARS	My biggest worry was that I would be a burden to my family.
PAIN	I think what hurt most was the suffering that my family had to endure.
LEGITIMATE ANGER	I always felt I had a right to be angry.

her family was much more important. There was also a NEED TO EXPLAIN things to the perpetrators in order to enhance their own understanding of the circumstances. She felt that they were targeted because of their skin colour and she needed to explain to the perpetrators that not all white people are bad. She experienced a need to understand what she did to deserve the violation. This need for UNDERSTANDING promoted EMPATHY for the perpetrators. FOCUSING ON THE POSITIVE rather than the negative enhanced the forgiveness process. She was glad that she was still alive. The fact that the violation was to an extent POLITICALLY JUSTIFIED. This made it easier to forgive. She feels that she would have been sad if the attack had been personal. The participant also expressed a COMMITMENT TOWARDS FORGIVING.

This is based on the fact that, even if the attack was not politically motivated, she would forgive anyway although it would not be easy.

The following themes are the results of further investigation into the participant's process of forgiveness by means of a reading guide (Phase 3, Stage 3, Step 2). The reading guide questions are provided and the themes that were identified in response to the questions are discussed.

What motivates one to forgive?

Participant Three was motivated by the DESIRE TO LEAD BY EXAMPLE and influence other people who were also violated, but who have difficulty in forgiving those responsible. A further contributory factor was her father's FORMATIVE INFLUENCES. She was raised with the belief that Apartheid was morally wrong. She also has a belief in the INHERENT HUMAN GOODNESS of others and felt that the perpetrators must have had a valid reason for committing the violation. She regarded the TRC AS A CREDIBLE INSTITUTION and this strengthened her resolve to forgive the perpetrators.

What assists this process?

The forgiveness process is assisted by the availability of an adequate SUPPORT NETWORK. The participant was able to rely on the active support of close family and friends. In addition to this she had professional support and managed to form close ties with some of the TRC commissioners with whom she has maintained contact even after she testified at the Commission's hearing.

What causes change?

The VIOLATION AND THE OPPORTUNITIES that it provides serves AS CATALYST FOR CHANGE. Because of what happened to her, the participant managed to meet and forge close links with remarkable people. She also gained a healthy perspective on life and, thus, regards the violation as a most enriching experience. She is adamant that all this would not have happened had the violation not taken place.

What causes pain?

One is saddened by the ABSENCE OF AN APOLOGY from the perpetrators. Although one knows that the violation was premeditated and of a political nature, at a subconscious level one expects the perpetrators to apologize, the absence of which results in considerable pain.

WITNESSING THE SUFFERING OF FAMILY also causes considerable pain.

The following inter-relations between the different themes were identified (Phase 3, Stage3, Step 3):

- There is a positive relationship between UNDERSTANDING and ACCEPTANCE.
- POLITICAL JUSTIFICATION enhances UNDERSTANDING and thus increases ACCEPTANCE.
- POLITICAL JUSTIFICATION promotes EMPATHY.
- The need for VERBAL OFFERING of forgiveness requires FACE-TO-FACE CONTACT.
- POLITICAL JUSTIFICATION facilitates the ONSET of forgiveness.
- DEPENDENCE increases FEARS.

- PAIN results in LEGITIMATE ANGER.
- DEPENDENCE facilitates feelings of GIVING UP.
- SUPPORT NETWORK decreases the desire to GIVE UP.
- SUPPORT NETWORK increases ACCEPTANCE and UNDERSTANDING.
- ABSENCE OF NEGATIVE EMOTIONS promotes a COMMITMENT TOWARDS FORGIVING
- SUPPORT NETWORK contributes to CHANGE IN PRIORITIES
- POLITICAL INSIGHT/JUSTIFICATION contributes to enabling one to deal with THE ABSENCE OF APOLOGY

4.4. The relationship between the structure and process of forgiveness

The following relationships between the process and structural themes were identified: FACE-TO-FACE CONTACT creates opportunities for UNDERSTANDING and EXPLAINING. ACCEPTANCE enables one to carry on with one's life and thus facilitates CLOSURE. NON-BITTERNESS is promoted by POLITICAL JUSTIFICATION (the fact that the violation was politically motivated), the desire to LEAD BY EXAMPLE, A BELIEF IN INHERENT HUMAN GOODNESS, THE CREDIBILITY OF THE TRC, as well as a firm COMMITMENT TOWARDS FORGIVING. This makes the ABSENCE OF OTHER NEGATIVE THOUGHTS AND EMOTIONS possible. ACCEPTANCE and UNDERSTANDING are facilitated by the emergence of the TRUTH.

5. Participant Four

5.1. Context of the act of forgiveness

Participant Four testified as a victim of gross human rights violations. His family comes from a small town in the Eastern Cape where racial oppression and discrimination was not as rife as in the larger cities. During the late 1970's, the participant moved to one of the larger Eastern Cape towns, taking his younger brother with him to complete his high school career. There the younger sibling was exposed to extreme forms of racial oppression and discrimination. With the youth being at the forefront of the resistance against Apartheid during that era, it was inevitable that the participant's brother would become involved in student politics. As a high school student he was detained and interrogated on a number of occasions. The family was also harassed with the security forces being a constant presence outside their house.

After high school, the participant's brother along with a friend, decided to join the armed wing of the ANC, Umkonto We Sizwe. He received military training outside South Africa, after which, he went into exile in Lesotho where he was stationed as political commissar and commander under the late Chris Hani. He was believed to have entered the country secretly on several occasions in the turbulent 1980's to organize and mobilize protest actions against Apartheid. Because of his influence and military skills, he was regarded as one of the most hated enemies of the State, with his picture being displayed at almost every police station all over the country and a reward offered for his arrest. After a failed attempt on his life in 1982, the participant's brother was eventually killed in 1985. He and his wife were assassinated in a cross border raid in Maseru carried out by SADF troops. It emerged at the TRC that the raid was planned and co-ordinated by Colonel Eugene de Kock. According to him, instructions for the raid was given by Brigadier Willem Schoon and approved by the then Prime Minister, P.W. Botha as well as Police

Commissioner Johan Coetzee and General Johan van der Merwe. Most of them have denied any knowledge of the raid and have not applied for any amnesty. The participant's testimony at the TRC was characterized by his expression of forgiveness, which was based on his intention to contribute to the broad process of reconciliation. What follows is the structure and process of his forgiveness experience as well as the relationship between the two.

5.2. The structure of forgiveness

With regards to structure (Phase 3, Stage 2, Step 1), the following themes were identified. The themes as well as examples of the indicators that the themes represent also appear in Table 9.

Although forgiveness has been granted, the EMOTIONAL EFFECTS OF THE VIOLATION REMAINS PRESENT. This is especially the case when one witness how those close to one are affected by the violation. Related to this is the fact that FORGIVING IS NOT FORGETTING because you are continually reminded about what you experienced. Forgiveness means relating to the perpetrators in an attitude of NON-BITTERNESS AND NON-VENGEANCE. There has to be a firm COMMITMENT TOWARDS FORGIVENESS. Forgiveness requires the emergence of the TRUTH. Those responsible for the violation should make known all the details of the attack and should not distort the truth in order to advantage themselves, for example when they apply for amnesty. Forgiveness is also about CLOSURE because it enables you to carry on with your life.

Table 9. Themes and indicators (the verbatim words of the participant) related to the structure of forgiveness of Participant Four.

THEMES	INDICATORS
PRESENCE OF THE EMOTIONAL EFFECTS OF THE VIOLATION	And you are constantly reminded of what happened. That happens especially when we make contact with my fourteen year old niece. Now what I understand is that at the last prize giving ceremony, she said, "What is the use I have all these medals, but I don't have parents to share it with.
FORGIVENESS IS NOT FORGETTING	You can forgive, but you cannot forget. But what we cannot ignore is the fact that a person cannot forget easily.
NON-BITTERNESS	That means that we don't feel any bitterness towards anyone.
NON-VENGEANCE	To forgive does not mean that you must entertain feelings of revenge.
TRUTH	But what we don't want is for this to be confused with the quest for the whole truth The fact that we have forgiven doesn't mean that we have given up this quest. It also does not mean that we are accepting distorted versions of the truth or selective truth.
COMMITMENT TOWARDS FORGIVENESS	That we should forgive and commit ourselves to reconciliation.
CLOSURE	Only the full truth will satisfy us

The following interactions or inter-relations among themes were also noted (Phase 3, Stage 2, Step 2):

- THE PRESENCE OF THE EFFECTS OF THE VIOLATION AFTER FORGIVENESS has been granted, underlies the fact that FORGIVENESS IS NOT FORGETTING.
- This, however, does not deter from the fact that there is a COMMITMENT TOWARDS FORGIVING.
- NON-VENGEFULNESS and NON-BITTERNESS is encouraged by one's COMMITMENT TOWARDS FORGIVENESS.
- NON-VENGEFULNESS AND COMMITMENT TOWARDS FORGIVENESS does not imply that the search for the TRUTH has been abandoned.
- The TRUTH facilitates CLOSURE.

5.3. The process of forgiveness

The following themes with regard to process were identified (Phase 3, Stage 3, Step 1): The themes as well as examples of the indicators that reveal the themes appear in Table 10.

Given the nature of the violation, FORGIVENESS was experienced AS AN UNFOLDING PROCESS that takes time. The journey towards forgiveness was characterized by a considerable amount of PAIN not only because of the violation itself, but also because of the suffering that loved ones endured because of the violation. This creates feelings of a SENSE OF UNFAIRNESS. The need for UNDERSTANDING also forms an integral part of the process. This relates to the perpetrators explaining what happened and why the violation was perpetrated. As one proceeds on the journey towards forgiveness, there is a realization that life goes on and that one should not allow oneself to be held hostage by the past. The gradual ACCEPTANCE of what happened and a resolve to carry on signify this.

Table 10. Themes and indicators (the verbatim words of the participant) related to the process of forgiveness of Participant Four.

THEMES	INDICATORS
FORGIVENESS AS AN UNFOLDING PROCESS	It is something that is extremely difficult. It took some time for us to come to a point that we can comfortably say that we bear no grudges and that we have forgiven.
PAIN	It wasn't easy especially when I think of all the pain that the family had to endure.
SENSE OF UNFAIRNESS	And you ask yourself why did it have to happen. And then you think about the unfairness of it all.
UNDERSTANDING	You have all these questions to which you need answers. You need people to come forward and explain things to you because at that stage it is impossible to conceive why things happened the way they did. It makes you desperate.
ACCEPTANCE	But in principle we have forgiven and we have accepted what has happened. We have finally achieved what we've been fighting for so long, and that makes it easy to accept everything and be optimistic about the future.

The following themes are the results of further investigation into the participant's process of forgiveness by means of a reading guide. (Phase 3, Stage 3, Step 2). The reading guide questions are provided and the themes that were identified in response to the questions are discussed.

What motivates one to forgive?

THE CREDIBILITY OF THE TRC motivated the participant to forgive. He whole-heartedly endorses the Commission's principle of non-vengeance. Testifying at the Commission and meeting other people, who either had similar or worse experiences, motivated him to forgive.

What assists this process?

The process of forgiveness was essentially assisted by the participant's COMMITMENT TOWARDS DEALING WITH THE PAST. He felt that the past couldn't be ignored as if it never happened. One has to confront it as this confrontation creates the possibility for forgiveness.

What causes change?

THE TRC served AS CATALYST FOR CHANGE in the case of this participant. He credits the commission for convincing him reconciliation is the responsibility of all South Africans and that a commitment towards reconciliation obliges you to forgive. Change was further promoted by witnessing the POLITICAL CHANGES that took place in the country.

What causes pain?

THE EFFECTS OF THE ATTACK caused the participant severe emotional pain.

The following inter-relations between the different themes were identified (Phase 3, Stage3, Step 3):

- THE CREDIBILITY OF THE TRC facilitates ACCEPTANCE.
- PAIN experienced reinforces the need for UNDERSTANDING.
- PAIN is responsible for perceiving the violation as UNFAIR.
- THE EFFECTS OF THE ATTACK are responsible for the PAIN that is experienced.

5.4. The relationship between the structure and process of forgiveness

The following relationships between the process and structural themes were identified (Stage 4 of the interpretive analytical process):

PAIN is experienced due to the constant PRESENCE OF THE EMOTIONAL EFFECTS OF THE ATTACK. THE CREDIBILITY OF THE TRC facilitates NON-VENGEANCE, as well as COMMITMENT TOWARDS FORGIVENESS. The TRUTH leads to UNDERSTANDING and ACCEPTANCE. This in turn facilitates CLOSURE. The PAIN that is suffered enhances the desire for the TRUTH. The emergence of the TRUTH encourages an attitude of NON-BITTERNESS. DEALING WITH THE PAST relates to the search for the absolute TRUTH.

6. Participant Five

This participant testified as a victim of gross human rights violations. She was the wife a well-known Eastern Cape ANC activist. Her husband's political activism meant that he was regarded as a prime target of the security forces. This also meant that the family life was severely disrupted, with her husband being detained on countless occasions and the family suffering severe harassment. On these occasions the participant had to endure the uncertainty of whether this was possibly the last time that she would see him. Her husband frequently expressed fears that, because of his prominence, he had the feeling that something terrible was going to happen to him. For this reason, he implored the participant not to get involved in the struggle so that if something should happen to him, she would be able to take care of the children. During one of his spells in detention, he was actually told that he and two other prominent Eastern Cape activists would be killed. In 1987 her husband disappeared under puzzling circumstances in Durban where he was studying at the time. Enquiries at hospitals, police stations and mortuaries, failed to produce any information as to what might had happened to him. His whereabouts are still unknown. Although no one has claimed any responsibility, it is believed that the security forces killed him and disposed of his remains. Her testimony was motivated by the desire to find out what exactly happened to her husband. During her testimony at the TRC, this participant stated that she had forgiven those who were responsible for her husband's disappearance. She further stated that the return of her husband's remains, in whatever form, will offer her the opportunity to give him a decent burial, which will in turn pave the way for reconciliation.

As mentioned earlier, the participant had experienced a change of heart by the time the researcher conducted the interview with her. It is argued that her forgiveness expressed at the TRC hearing was more of an expectational nature and thus not authentic forgiveness. This is

based on the fact that the TRC was instituted by the ANC to which she was committed and loyal, as well as the fact that calls for forgiveness and reconciliation came from those who were perceived to have all the right not to forgive or reconcile. According to Enright, Santos and Al-Mabuk (1989) expectational forgiveness occurs in response to social pressure. It is, therefore, possible that the participant might have felt pressurized to grant forgiveness at the hearing that she attended.

From an examination of the themes and the indicators, it thus becomes clear that this participant has undergone considerable change in her attitude towards those who are considered to be responsible for her husband's disappearance. The change became apparent in the initial stages of the interview. Whereas her forgiveness was complete and unconditional during her testimony at the TRC, it now seemed to be conditional on the truth. This does not, however, imply that forgiveness will naturally follow once the full truth has been divulged. It merely insinuates that forgiveness will be considered under this condition. Thus, although the truth does not guarantee forgiveness, it does allow for its possibility. This possibility is, however, eliminated by the participant's expression, later during the interview, of an inability and unwillingness to forgive. The following justifications for her inability or unwillingness to forgive are provided.

The participant cannot see any justification for what happened to her husband and the effect that it had on her family. Her husband was merely fighting for what was rightfully his. Related to this was her perceived legitimacy of the armed struggle in which he was involved. Because of her husband's disappearance, she suffered a lot as her husband's absence limited her ability to carry out her parental duties. The participant perceives the way in which oppression took place as violent, cruel and premeditated. The lies and dishonesty of those who came forward further

reinforced the participant's unforgiving attitude. The selective divulging of the truth also incensed her.

The participant's inability or unwillingness to forgive, however, seems to stem primarily from her dissatisfaction with the TRC and the fact that she perceived the Commission to be serving more the interests of the perpetrators than that of the victims of gross human rights abuses. This assumption is based on the fact that the participant expressed forgiveness at the TRC, but subsequently had a change of heart. She sees the TRC as facilitating and endorsing the dishonesty of those who came forward only to lie and provide information that is already known. She is also disgruntled with the amnesty process and sees this as a severe injustice for which she holds the TRC responsible. She, therefore, perceives the TRC to be a useless exercise and tantamount to a betrayal of the sacrifices that were made for the liberation struggle. The participant sees justice as important and views the TRC as an obstruction to this:

CHAPTER 7.

THE STRUCTURE AND PROCESS OF FORGIVENESS ACROSS INDIVIDUAL PARTICIPANTS

1. Introduction

Whereas the previous chapter offers the results of the exploration into each individual participant's structure and process of forgiveness following gross human rights violations, this chapter is a presentation of the comparison of the structure and process of forgiveness across individuals. It, therefore, encompasses a description of the results of Phase 4 of the interpretive-analytical process.

2. The structure of forgiveness across individual participants

This section presents the results of Phase 4, Step 1 of the interpretive-analytical process, i.e. a comparison between the structure of forgiveness across the five study participants. The different themes that emerged from each individual participant's structure of forgiveness will be discussed. Most of the themes are common among participants while some are unique to Participant Three. Some of the themes are self-explanatory, while others are not. Thus for clarification purposes, a description of the manner in which themes are manifested will also be provided. For a graphic representation of all the different themes and how they are spread across individual participants, see Figure 2.

Figure 2: The distribution of themes related to the structure of forgiveness across participants

Themes related to the structure of forgiveness		Participants				
		1	2	3	4	5
1	Presence of effects after forgiveness	■	■		■	
2	Not forgetting	■	■		■	
3	Non-vengeance	■	■	■	■	
4	Non-bitterness		■	■	■	
5	Face-to-face contact	■		■		
6	Truth	■	■	■	■	■
7	Commitment towards forgiveness	■			■	
8	Closure		■	■	■	
9	Starting over		■	■		
10	Unconditionality			■		
11	Respect for basic human rights			■		
12	Verbal offering			■		
13	Authenticity			■		

Although forgiveness has been granted, the effects of the violation remain present. In the case of Participants One, Two and Four, the theme relates to the presence of the emotional and psychological effects of the violation. In the case of Participants One and Two this extends to the presence of the physical effects of the injuries they sustained as a result of the violation. These participants were survivors of gross human rights violations and were, therefore, personally involved in the incidents in which the violations took place. Forgiveness, therefore, does not imply a disappearance of physical wounds or the emotional and psychological pain that resulted from the violation. These remain and serve to remind the participants of the violation. Directly related to this, is the fact that forgiveness is not tantamount to forgetting. For all three participants these two elements of the structure of forgiveness are interrelated. This can be ascribed to the nature of the violation. In cases where the violation is less severe, one can, therefore, expect this interrelation to be non-existent, as it is possible for the memory of the violation to become lost or suppressed.

Participants One, Two, Three and Four talk about non-vengeance. In addition to this the structure of forgiveness of Participants Two, Three and Four also includes non-bitterness. This raises questions of what the source of this non-vengeance and non-bitterness is. For Participant Three non-vengeance and non-bitterness is implicit in her belief that unconditional love for the perpetrators is one of the most important elements of the structure of forgiveness. Also related to this, in the case of Participant Three, is the fact that forgiveness is also a demonstration of respect for the basic human rights of perpetrators. It is an acknowledgement that even those who violate our human rights deserve to be treated with respect. Participants One and Three further attach significance to face-to-face contact. For Participant One this element of the structure of forgiveness relates to the need to know the identity of the perpetrators so as know towards whom forgiveness should be directed. For Participant Three on the other hand, it relates to the need to

have physical contact with the perpetrator. This includes the shaking of hands as a way of demonstrating authenticity and entrenching forgiveness.

All the participants regard truth as an essential element in the structure of forgiveness. For Participant One truth is related to and facilitated by face-to-face contact and also relates to the identity of the perpetrator. Participant Two talks about truth in a more general sense. This involves mutual forgiveness where it is important for those who defended as well as those who opposed Apartheid, to come forward and make known their actions. Participants Two, Three and Four further regard truth as an important element in the structure of forgiveness because it leads to closure. This means being able to put the violation behind one and to carry on with one's life with little interference from the effects of the violation. For Participants Four and Five, truth also relates to the importance of knowing what happened during the violation. This can be ascribed to the fact that they were victims of gross human rights violations and thus not personally involved in the violation.

The structure of forgiveness of Participants One and Four includes a strong commitment towards forgiveness. In the cases of both participants this commitment is politically motivated. Both have been members of the ANC for a long time and are thus committed to the ideals of the party. Two additional interrelated elements in the structure of forgiveness of Participant Three is starting over and verbal offering. It is important both for the victim as well as the perpetrator to put the violation behind them and to start over. This resolve to start over has to be done verbally and, therefore, requires face-to-face and physical contact. Participant Three also believes that forgiveness has to be authentic. True forgiveness is a personal decision that should not be forced on a person.

From an examination of the theme distribution among participants it is apparent that the structure of forgiveness of the individual participants are not identical. It is also clear that Participants One, Two, and Four appear to have a significant number of themes in common. Thus leading one to the conclusion that they might more or less have identical structures of forgiveness. This is, however, misleading. A careful examination of the themes and their corresponding indicators reveals that individual participants do not attach the same significance to the themes that they have in common. At the same time, it has to be added that there are significant similarities between the structure of forgiveness of some participants. Participants One, Two and Four have four themes in common. In addition to this, their individual structures also contain more or less the same number of themes. A possible explanation for this could be the fact that they subscribe to the same political ideology. The forgiveness structure of Participant Three on the other hand, because of the large number of themes it contain, appear to be much more elaborate than that of the other participants. This participant's structure seemed to be informed by an interaction between ideological beliefs and moral convictions. Although she was not a political activist, she had an acute awareness of the injustices perpetuated by the National Party Government.

3. The process of forgiveness across individual participants

This section presents the results of Phase 4, Step 2 of the interpretive-analytical process, i.e. a comparison between the process of forgiveness across the five study participants. The different themes that emerged from the forgiveness process of each individual participant were compared for differences and similarities. A discussion of these is the focus of this section. As was the case in the previous section, participants share some of the themes while others are unique to a single participant. Some of the themes are self-explanatory, while others are not. Thus for further

clarification purposes, a description of the manner in which themes are manifested will also be provided. Various themes can further be grouped together because they appear to be characteristic of specific stages during the process of forgiveness. In the next chapter these themes will be clustered together and discussed accordingly. This, however, does not imply that themes follow a sequential order. For a graphic representation of all the different themes and how they are spread across individual participants, see Figure 3.

Forgiveness is a non-instantaneous unfolding process that takes a considerable amount of time. Participants One, Two and Four emphasized the fact that there was a considerable amount of time involved from the time of the violation until they were finally able to forgive the perpetrators of the violations. Participant Four ascribes this unfolding nature of forgiveness specifically to the nature of the violation. Characteristic of this unfolding nature is the pain that is experienced. Participants One, Two, Three and Four talk about pain essentially caused by having to witness one's family suffer as a result of the violation. In the case of the first three participants, this pain is also a result of the physical injuries they sustained as a result of the violation. Pain for Participant Four is of an emotional nature. This relates to witnessing other family members suffer, thus leading to the perception of the violation as unfair. During this time Participants One, Two and Three experienced anger that was perceived as legitimate. Participants One and Two based this reasoning on the fact that, as freedom fighters, they were fighting for what was rightfully theirs, whereas Participant Three argued that, as an innocent civilian, she had the right to be angry. In addition to this, other negative emotions such as resentment in the case of Participant One and sadness in the case of Participant Two, was also experienced. Sadness was caused by the perception of unfairness of the violation. Participant Three, on the other hand, reports the absence of negative emotions.

Figure 3: The distribution of themes related to the process of forgiveness across participants

Themes related to the process of forgiveness		Participants				
		1	2	3	4	5
1	Forgiveness as unfolding					
2	Legitimate anger					
3	Other negative emotions and thoughts					
4	Pain					
5	Fears					
6	Sense of unfairness					
7	Giving up					
8	Dependence					
9	Understanding					
10	Explaining					
11	Onset					
12	Political insight and justification					
13	Empathy					
14	Meaning in suffering					
15	Focussing on the positive					
16	Change in priorities					
17	Acceptance					
18	Self-reliance					
19	Commitment towards forgiveness					

As the individual journeys along the process of forgiveness, fear is also experienced. Participant One feared that he might not be able to adequately care for his dependants, while Participant Two feared that he might not be able to finance future medical treatment. In the case of Participant Three, fear was related to the fact that she might be dependent on others. Fears lead to feelings of wanting to give up. Due to the cruel nature and the unfairness of the violation, Participant Two felt like giving up. The prospect of being dependent on others was difficult to bear for Participant Three. At times like these she wished that she had not survived the attack.

Following these anxieties there is a need to gain a deeper understanding into the violation. For Participants One, Two and Three (all of whom are survivors of the gross human rights violations), this need for understanding entails wanting to know why the violation took place and what they did to deserve that kind of treatment. As a victim of gross human rights violations, Participant Four has an interest surrounding the circumstances during the attack. In an effort to gain a deeper understanding, Participant Two further attempted to view things from the perspective of the perpetrator. In addition to understanding, there is also a need for explaining. Participants One and Three felt the need to answer possible questions that the perpetrators might have had.

Participants Two and Three were able to identify clear stages in the process at which they began to forgive. For Participant Two this was when he realized that he had to rely on himself if he was to cope with his crisis whereas Participant Three was committed towards forgiving the perpetrators from the beginning. This was made possible by her perception that the violation was to a certain extent, politically justified. It also allowed her to empathize with the perpetrators. She felt that, had she been black, she would not have done the same thing but she would have been extremely angry with the National Party Government. The onset of forgiveness for

Participant Two was also the need to find meaning in the suffering that he had to endure. It was important to know that his suffering had significance. In addition to this, Participants Two and Three resolved to focus on the positive rather than the negative. For Participant Two it was important to focus on the progress that was made rather than the sacrifices. Participant Three, on the other hand, decided to appreciate the fact that she survived the violation as well as the positive aspects that the violation brought into her life. Because of the violation she experienced a change in priorities and realized the importance of things that she used to take for granted before the violation.

At the end of the forgiveness process, one is able to accept what happened. For Participant One acceptance is demonstrated by his ability to be comfortable with what happened and to carry on with his life. In the case of Participants Two and Four the decision to put everything behind him and enjoy the freedom for which they have fought, is indicative of their acceptance. For Participant Three, acceptance is signified by her belief that what happened to her could have happened to anyone. At some stage during the forgiveness process, Participants One, Two, Three and Four were able to accept what happened.

The following themes are the results of further investigation into the participants' process of forgiveness by means of a reading guide. (Phase 3, Stage 3, Step 2). The reading guide questions are provided and the themes that were identified by all the participants are discussed. The participants who manifested the various themes are in brackets.

What motivates one to forgive?

- THE CREDIBILITY OF THE TRC (Participants One, Two, Three and Four) – the fact that the TRC was perceived as a credible institution, motivated the participants to forgive.
- POLITICAL INSIGHT (Participant One) – the participant was able to see the violation in the political context in which it had occurred.
- DESIRE TO LEAD BY EXAMPLE (Participants Two and Three) – the participants were motivated by the desire to lead by example and influence others. The others referred to by Participant Two were the outside world in order to show them that there is an alternative to hatred and revenge. Participant Three on the other hand, refers specifically to those who have been violated but who are unable to forgive. She expressed the need to demonstrate to them how one can be healed through forgiveness.
- PHILOSOPHICAL PRINCIPLES (Participant Two) – the participant was motivated by his philosophy that someone needs to stop the cycle of violence.
- FORMATIVE INFLUENCES (Participant Three) – the participant was further motivated by the guidance they received while they were growing up. Her father taught her that Apartheid was morally wrong and that we all need forgiveness at some stage in our lives.
- INHERENT HUMAN GOODNESS (Participant Three) – this participant was also motivated by the inherent human goodness, which she believes we all possess.
- OBLIGATION TO FORGIVE (Participant Two) – this participant was motivated by the belief that he had an obligation to forgive others because he will eventually need others to forgive him.

What assists the forgiveness process?

- **SUPPORT NETWORK** (Participants One and Three) – the participants were assisted by the availability of an adequate support network. In the case of Participant One, this refers to the support he received during his interaction with the TRC. Participant Three received considerable support from family and friends, as well as TRC commissioners with whom she managed to forge close links.
- **DEALING WITH THE PAST** (Participants Two and Four) – the determination to deal with the past, assisted the participants in their forgiveness process. This relates specifically to dealing with the effects of the violation.
- **NON-JUDGEMENT** (Participant Two) – this participant was assisted by his ability to be non-judgmental towards the perpetrators.
- **COMPENSATION** (Participant One) - The fact that some sort of compensation was forthcoming aided the forgiveness process.

What causes change?

- **THE TRC** (Participants One, Two and Four) – the TRC served as a catalyst for change.
- **CHANGE IN POLITICAL SITUATION** (Participants Two and Four) – the fact that significant political change had taken place caused the participants to change.
- **THE VIOLATION** (Participant Three) – the violation served as a catalyst for change. It forced the participant to re-prioritize her life.
- **NEW OPPORTUNITIES** (Participant Three) – the participant also perceives change as a result of the new opportunities for growth, understanding, awareness and friendships provided by the violation.

What causes pain?

- **THE EFFECTS OF THE ATTACK** (Participants One and Four) – the emotional and physical effects of the violation caused considerable pain.
- **ABSENCE OF APOLOGY** (Participant Three) – the fact that the perpetrators did not apologize for the violation was a painful experience for the participant.
- **SUFFERING OF FAMILY** (Participant Four) – the suffering endured by family members also caused this participant a significant amount of pain.

4. The relationship between the structure and process across individual participants

This section encompasses a discussion of the interrelations, if any, the process and structural themes across individuals i.e. Phase 4, Step 3 of the interpretive-analytical process. Each of the structural themes will be taken and will then be discussed in relation to the process themes to which they are connected.

4.1. PRESENCE OF THE EFFECTS AFTER FORGIVENESS

PAIN is experienced due to the constant **PRESENCE OF THE PHYSICAL AND EMOTIONAL EFFECTS OF THE ATTACK**. The **PRESENCE OF THE EFFECTS OF THE ATTACK** was also responsible for the **ANGER AND NEGATIVE EMOTIONS** that the participant originally had. The **PRESENCE OF THE PHYSICAL EFFECTS OF THE ATTACK** underlies the fact that forgiveness is not easy and that it is **AN UNFOLDING PROCESS** that takes time. It also reinforces the **SENSE OF UNFAIRNESS** that one experiences and facilitates feelings of

GIVING UP. In addition to this, it increases FEARS about the extent of physical injuries that was suffered.

4.2. NOT-FORGETTING

PAIN and FEARS about one's health as well as the possibility that one will not be able to take care of one's children makes FORGETTING difficult.

4.3. NON-VENGEANCE

One's POLITICAL INSIGHT and THE CREDIBILITY OF THE TRC facilitate NON-VENGEANCE. NON-VENGEANCE is promoted not only by the determination to LEAD BY EXAMPLE and a NON-JUDGEMENTAL ORIENTATION, but also by the need to find MEANING IN SUFFERING, PHILOSOPHICAL PRINCIPLES and the CHANGING POLITICAL SITUATION. It is further reinforced by the perception of FORGIVENESS AS AN OBLIGATION.

4.4. NON-BITTERNESS

NON-BITTERNESS is promoted not only by the determination to LEAD BY EXAMPLE and a NON-JUDGEMENTAL ORIENTATION, but also by the need to find MEANING IN SUFFERING, PHILOSOPHICAL PRINCIPLES and the CHANGING POLITICAL SITUATION. It is further reinforced by the perception of FORGIVENESS AS AN OBLIGATION. NON-BITTERNESS is promoted by POLITICAL JUSTIFICATION (the fact that the violation was politically motivated), the desire to LEAD BY EXAMPLE,

PHILOSOPHICAL PRINCIPLES, FORMATIVE INFLUENCES, A BELIEF IN INHERENT HUMAN GOODNESS, THE CREDIBILITY OF THE TRC, as well as a firm COMMITMENT TOWARDS FORGIVING. This makes the ABSENCE OF OTHER NEGATIVE THOUGHTS AND EMOTIONS possible. The emergence of the TRUTH encourages an attitude of NON-BITTERNESS.

4.5. FACE-TO-FACE CONTACT

FACE-TO-FACE CONTACT enables one to EXPLAIN and answer questions. It also creates opportunities for UNDERSTANDING.

4.6. TRUTH

The TRUTH leads to UNDERSTANDING and ACCEPTANCE. The PAIN and the experience of a SENSE OF UNFAIRNESS enhance the need for the TRUTH. This in turn facilitates CLOSURE. DEALING WITH THE PAST relates to the search for the absolute TRUTH.

4.7. CLOSURE

The need for CLOSURE is reinforced by the need for UNDERSTANDING.

ACCEPTANCE enables one to carry on with one's life and thus facilitates CLOSURE.

CHAPTER 8.

CONTEXTUALISATION OF RESULTS WITHIN THE LITERATURE

1. Introduction

In Chapter 6, the results of Phase 3 of the interpretive analytical process were discussed, i.e. the interpretation of each individual participant's experience of the structure and process of forgiveness following gross human rights violations. This process produced the first-order interpretive data. In Chapter 7, the results of Phase 4 of the interpretive analytical process were discussed, i.e. a comparison of the structure and process of forgiveness across participants. This process yielded the second-order interpretive data. The current chapter involves a discussion of the contextualisation of the second-order interpretive data within the theoretical literature discussed in Chapter 3. This process yielded the third-order interpretive data.

Justification for this phase in the analysis requires a return to the notion of the hermeneutical circle (see Chapter 4, Section 3.1.3). In terms of the hermeneutical circle, a complete understanding of the text can be arrived at by moving through all levels of the whole-part relation. Van Vlaenderen (1997) argues that combining the raw data, interpretive data and theory, provides an alternative and rich context for interpretation and as a result, is conducive to new, complimentary and/or alternative interpretive insights. It is believed that this phase in the interpretive process, which approaches data from a different angle (against a different contextual background), enhances validity of the interpretation of the participants' experience of the structure and process of forgiveness following gross human rights violations. What follows are the results of this interpretive phase.

2. The structure of forgiveness following gross human rights violations

Forgiveness is only possible once the actions of others, whether by omission or commission, are perceived as hurtful, whether harm was intentional or not. Smedes (1984) asserts that the hurt or injury might be of a physical, psychological, emotional or moral nature. From the interview data it is clear that the effects of the hurt suffered by the participants, whether physical or emotional, are still present, though not to the extent that it has hampered them from transcending their respective violations and living productive lives. This is understandable given the nature of the violations and the subsequent hurt they suffered. Whereas the survivors of the violations suffered physical harm, the victims, by virtue of the fact that they were not physically involved in the violation, suffered harm that was more of a psychological and emotional nature. Related to this, is the fact that forgiving someone for the harm that person has inflicted on you does not mean that the violation that caused the hurt is automatically erased from the consciousness. One is constantly reminded of the violation. This reminder might take the form of physical scars in the case of survivors and the recurring awareness of the absence of their loved one in the case of victims. Akin to the view expressed by Smedes (1984) forgiveness, therefore, is not tantamount to forgetting.

Interpretation of the data revealed that the emergence of the truth is an essential component of forgiveness. This is mainly due to the context in which the violations took place. The participants did not know the perpetrators before the violation. Clandestine operations were also used to commit the violations in order to protect the identity of perpetrators and create the impression that someone else was responsible. In cases where the identities of some of the perpetrators are known, it appears that others, who were also involved, remain anonymous. Another disturbing factor for the participants was the fact that those who did come forward only did so either to

protect themselves or improve their chances for amnesty. For these reason the truth involves several aspects. The first relates to the identity of the perpetrators. Participants felt that it is important to know whom to forgive. The second aspect involves knowing exactly what happened, especially for those participants defined as victims. As they were not personally involved in the violation, they had to be satisfied with the contradictory statements made by those who are suspected of knowing who is responsible for the violation and what happened to their relatives. The third aspect relates to wanting to know why things happened the way they did. This desire for the truth seems to be motivated by the desire to gain a deeper understanding into the violation and to achieve closure.

Forgiveness entails taking a stance of non-vengeance and non-bitterness towards those who violated your human rights. This corresponds with the view adopted by North (1987), Van der Walt (1996) and Shriver (1995) who also emphasizes the relevance of non-vengeance when forgiveness is granted in a political context. From the data it also emerged that forgiveness signifies a willingness to start over. This is corroborated by Scobie and Scobie (1996). Results of a study done by them suggest that a new beginning is a motivational force in a person's decision to forgive. Participants felt that the need to start again should be offered verbally, which by implication requires face-to-face physical contact. Literature, however, suggests the contrary. For example, Fow (1996) suggests that forgiveness need not involve an explicit, spoken pardon, neither does it always result in reconciliation. It should, however, be added that what Fow is referring to is forgiveness of an interpersonal kind and that the actions that resulted in the hurt of his study participants was not as extreme as the gross human rights violations suffered by the participants of the current study. Given the fact that the participants still suffer from the physical, psychological and emotional effects of the violation, it can be expected that their

conceptualization of forgiveness will be more complex and will have aspects to it that will not be deemed important in the granting of everyday interpersonal forgiveness.

There is a clear distinction between authentic forgiveness and unauthentic forgiveness. Evidence from the present study suggests that authentic forgiveness comes from the heart. It entails being honest to oneself and making a coercion-free decision to forgive while simultaneously acknowledging that an injustice has been done. Literature seems to support this. According to Sells and Hargrave (1998), the distinction between forgiveness as a behavioral virtue or therapeutic goal and false forgiveness or pseudo-forgiveness has been discussed by many. Bass and Davies (1994) for example, expose an essential consideration in conceptualizing forgiveness when they argue that there is an artificial forgiveness in which perpetrators maintain dominance and subtly promote a continuation of the injury. Similarly, Enright and Zell (1989) contend that the dangers of pseudo-forgiveness may include manipulation, avoidance of injustice or perpetuation of injury. Johnson (1986) on the other hand, describes false forgiveness as a denial of the violation, which leads to superficial acceptance, and an external presentation of relational connectedness. Interview data further suggests authentic forgiveness also include a firm commitment towards forgiving perpetrators despite the fact that the effects of the violation are still present. Neblett (1974) corroborates this view. Forgiveness is a personal decision on the part of the victim or survivor and should not be forced upon people. For this reason McCullough, Sandage and Worthington Jnr. (1995) warn that forgiveness should not be oppressive or forced upon people. Because all the issues are not fully resolved, this type of forgiveness has a short life span.

Forgiveness is also about unconditional love. This appears to be to a certain extent consistent with Walrond-Skinn's (1998) contention that forgiveness is offered to a perpetrator regardless of

that person's response. Forgiveness is, therefore, not contingent on a confession or an apology from the perpetrator, although it has been found that a confession has a more positive affective reaction on the receivers of the confession and that they will thus be more likely to forgive (Weiner et al., 1991). Similarly it has been found that an apology from someone who has hurt us, encourages forgiving (see Al-Mabuk et al., 1995; Darby & Schlenker, 1982; McCullough et al., 1997; Weiner et al., 1991). Forgiveness is further conceptualized as a portrayal of respect for the human rights of the perpetrators. According to Davenport (1991), one of the six ingredients of forgiveness is viewing the perpetrator with complexity rather than dehumanization. Thus, forgiveness includes an acknowledgement of the humanity of the perpetrator as well as his/her right to be treated as human.

3. The process of forgiveness following gross human rights violations

The process of forgiveness is very complex and individualized. Analogous to the findings of Enright et al. (1992), the results of the present study suggest that the process whereby one person forgives another involves many progressions before one finally forgives. It further shows that the forgiveness process is not as rigid and sequential as many would like to believe. Some individuals experience changes that others skip completely, while other people may cycle back and repeat earlier ones. This is especially true in the case of the negative emotions that are experienced. Some participants reported that they still experience occasional anger, sadness and feelings of unfairness. These findings are congruent with those of Hebl & Enright (1993) and Enright et al. (1992).

This discussion will, therefore, entail a contextualisation, within the theory, of the themes that have been identified as characteristic of the forgiveness process of the study participants. As

mentioned in Chapter 7. Section 3, for purposes of clarity, themes will be clustered and discussed under a common heading of a higher-order theme. In addition to this, the results of further investigation into the participants' process of forgiveness by means of a reading guide, will be integrated into the discussion of the themes.

The first two higher order themes represent the preforgiveness intrapersonal conflict and the anxieties that followed the hurt that the participants suffered as a result of the violations. The remaining two higher-order themes represent conscious efforts that were made to resolve the intrapersonal conflicts in a constructive manner and conditions that facilitated the emergence of forgiveness.

3.1. Preforgiveness intrapersonal conflict

Preforgiveness intrapersonal conflict relates to the general nature of the process of forgiveness and the inherent difficulties that accompany this process. In terms of the participants' experience the time factor was inherent in the forgiveness process. The general feeling is that forgiveness is an unfolding and difficult process, which was characterized by a significant amount of pain, physical and otherwise, especially in the light of the type of violations and the suffering that relatives had to endure. Research conducted by the Human Development Study Group (1991), Fitzgibbons (1986) and Hope (1987) substantiate this. Similarly North (1987) contends that forgiveness is not easy and that it is only achievable after a hard fought battle. Negative emotions are also experienced during the initial stages. Some of these resurface occasionally even after significant progress towards forgiveness has been made.

Participants identified anger and sadness as some of these emotions. The expression of anger is assumed to be a normal reaction to deep personal injury. According to Davenport (1991) the absence of anger in someone, who has been violated, is often a sign for considerable concern. In addition to this, Brandsma (1982) believes that a person can only forgive once his/her anger is resolved. Participants One, Two and Three also emphasized that they perceived this anger as legitimate. Legitimacy derives from the perception of the violation as unjust and premeditated. They felt that they did not deserve to be violated the way they were. Other reasons put forward for this perception is the fact that they were innocent, they were fighting a just cause, or that it was unfair that their relatives also had to suffer. This feeling of injustice was exacerbated by the fact that the perpetrators stood a chance of being granted amnesty, while they will have to live with the physical and psychological effects of the violation possibly for years to come. This feeling of injustice frequently led to feelings of giving up and wanting to die in the case of Participants Two and Three respectively. Kiel (1986) argues that it often happens that the injured party compares his/her injured self with the unharmed self of the perpetrator. According to Flanigan (1987) this comparison provides insights into a possibly altered 'just' worldview, that is justice in favor of the perpetrators.

Other negative emotions that were reported include resentment. According to McGary (1989), forgiveness plays an important part in not letting our resentment towards wrongdoing go beyond appropriate limits. This is based on the assumption that if resentment is not adequately dealt with, it will become so consuming that those doing the resenting will not be able to properly recognize and assess moral reasons.

3.2. Additional anxieties and their effects

Participants experienced significant fear as a result of several factors. In the case of Participant One fear was related to the possible inability to provide for one's children as a result of the injuries that was suffered during the violation. In the case of Participant Two, fear was related to the inability to afford much needed medical treatment in the future and another because of the dependence that physical injuries created. While in the case of Participant Three, it was related to being dependent on others. These fears contributed to feelings of giving up. As a result of these fears, participants also reported the need to gain a deeper understanding into violation. In the case of the survivors, understanding relates to the need to determine the motives of the perpetrators and why they as survivors were targeted. In the case of the victims, understanding relates to the desire to know what exactly happened. In this sense understanding appears to be related to the truth. In addition to this they also reported a need to provide explanations to perpetrators. This is based on the perception that there have been misconceptions in the past that resulted in the facilitation of gross human rights violations. Therefore, just as they need understanding, they assume that perpetrators might also need understanding. This can be accomplished by giving them explanations and answering questions that they might have. Understanding and explaining, therefore, seems to be aimed at clarifying the misconceptions that have been part of Black-White relations in the past.

Although literature does not support this need for understanding and explaining, it should be taken into account that literature on forgiveness predominantly focuses on interpersonal forgiveness and not on forgiveness following gross human rights violations that had a political dimension to it. With interpersonal forgiveness, the violation is almost never a result of political

differences and also rarely of a severe physical nature, that the injuries of those who are hurt causes them to experience anxiety as a result of the fears noted above.

3.3. Exploring forgiveness as an option

After the intrapersonal conflicts and anxieties, there appears to be a willingness to explore forgiveness as an option. Participants Two and Three were able to identify a time or stage during the forgiveness process when they began to feel a desire to express forgiveness towards the perpetrators. The onset of forgiveness can be immediately after the violation, as was in the case of Participant Three. This was made possible by her ability to view the violation as an opportunity for growth and understanding, as well as awareness of the self and the other. This also enabled the participant to firmly commit herself towards forgiving. The violation, therefore, served as a catalyst for change. It also led to her re-prioritizing her life. She began to appreciate the value of her family and also became less materialistic. Onset can also occur later during the forgiveness process after the intrapersonal conflicts and the anxieties have been adequately dealt with. In addition to his testimony at the TRC, onset was a direct result of the significant political changes that were taking place in the case of Participant Two. Although the other participants were not able to identify a distinct stage when they began to change in their attitudes towards the perpetrators, they also credit the TRC and the political progress that was made as responsible for their changing attitude towards the perpetrators. In their case onset was, therefore, more subtle, and thus, less identifiable. According to Neblett (1974), onset is a common trait of the process of forgiveness. In addition to this Participant One welcomed the TRC's promise of compensation, as this will contribute significantly towards lessening his financial burden, and in the process, allaying his fears.

Change was further assisted by the availability of a support network and the determination to deal with the past by confronting one's pain and anger. Participant Three received significant professional help as well as the support of her family and people that she managed to forge close personal links with at the TRC. Participant One values the support he received at the TRC. Participant Two on the other hand, believed that he had no right to judge others and that he also had an obligation to forgive. He strongly felt that, because he either required someone else's forgiveness in the past or he will be requiring it in the future, he is obliged to forgive the perpetrators. Cunningham's (1985) study yielded identical results.

One also begins to view the violation from a political perspective. For Participants Two and Three this entailed attempting to put themselves in the shoes of the perpetrators and viewing their actions within the political context in which it had occurred. This enabled Participant Three to conclude that the violation carried a measure of political justification, albeit to a limited extent. In the case of Participant Three, there was a further realization that the violation was not a personal vendetta and that it was important to focus on the positive things that were gained from the violation. Gaining political insight into the violation enabled both participants to empathize with the perpetrators. Cunningham's (1985) and Davenport's (1991) study of forgiveness provides similar results to those obtained in this study. The forgiveness process also includes an existential dimension. In order to deal with the effects of the violation, it was important for Participant Two to develop an existential awareness of the suffering he endured. This is akin to the existential philosophy of Frankl (1959). According to him, if there is a purpose in life at all, there must surely be a purpose in suffering and dying. Shantall (1989) elaborates on this when she contends that the moment our suffering becomes meaningful, it loses its unbearable quality and it becomes another one of life's tasks, which offers a special and great challenge. This involves a cognitive reframing process, which allows you to alter the significance that the

violation and the subsequent suffering served. By viewing the suffering in a positive light, the sufferer is able to transcend it. For Participant Two, this involved believing that his suffering was not worthless, but rather that it was a significant contribution toward attaining the freedom that he is now able to enjoy.

3.4. Acceptance and forgiving

The end of the forgiveness process is characterized by an ability to accept what happened and to carry on with one's life. According to Bergin (1988), at some stage during the forgiveness process, people absorb the pain that they endured and as a consequence, they are able to accept the hurt that has been done to them. Although this does not mean that they have forgotten about the violation, it does mean that they are now able to move forward and live lives that are almost as productive and in some cases even more productive than the ones they lived prior to the violation.

CHAPTER 9

CONCLUSION

1. Introduction

The focus of the inquiry was to gain an in-depth understanding into the structure and process of forgiveness following gross human rights violations. To this end, three aims were regarded as pivotal. Firstly, the study was aimed at revealing what the participants meant when they said ‘I forgive you’ to those who have grossly violated their human rights. In other words, developing an understanding of the participants’ structure, definition or conceptualization of forgiveness. The second aim was to explicate the process whereby the participants arrive at their conceptualized structure of forgiveness. Finally, the inquiry was aimed at revealing the relation, if any, between the structure and process of forgiveness following gross human rights violations. The findings related to the above-mentioned aims are reported in Chapters 6, 7 and 8. In the current Chapter, the study is concluded. This will be accomplished by examining the extent to which the aims of the study has been achieved. It will also include a reflection on the difficult nature of conducting this type of research. Finally, recommendations will be made for further scholarship within the field of forgiveness as it relates to gross human rights violations

2. Reflecting on the aims of the study

In terms of the first aim, it appears that the structure of forgiveness is characterized by a host of cognitive, affective and behavioral modes in terms of which the victims and survivors relate to the perpetrators. Results of the study indicate that the granting of forgiveness is contingent on a harmful act, the effects of which remain present despite the fact that forgiveness have been granted. This presence by implication means that forgiving is not equivalent to forgetting. There

further appears to be a clear distinction between authentic pseudo-forgiveness. Forgiveness also means that one relates to those responsible of the violation in attitudes of non-bitterness and non-vengeance. This is motivated by the belief that the perpetrators have the right to be loved unconditionally. Forgiveness is also a demonstration of a willingness to start again. This willingness is offered verbally and can also be symbolized by the shaking of hands between the victim/survivor and the perpetrator. This in turn is indicative of a display of a commitment towards forgiveness. Another significant dimension of the structure of forgiveness is the desire for the truth and the fact that this desire is not abandoned although forgiveness has taken place. This desire for the truth further creates the possibility of closure.

In terms of the second aim, results indicate that forgiveness is a complex and highly individualized process. Forgiving another person is time-consuming, especially in the light of the nature of the violations that were suffered. At the beginning of the forgiveness process, individuals experience what can be termed pre-forgiveness intrapersonal conflicts and anxieties. These include negative thoughts and emotions that the person harbors against the perpetrator as a result of the pain and harm that was suffered. Unsuccessful attempts to adequately deal with these thoughts and emotions leads to a willingness to explore forgiveness as an option. During this stage the individual typically begins to view the violation and the perpetrator in a new light. This enables the individual to replace the negative thoughts, emotions and behavioral intentions with neutral or positive ones. All of these culminate in the individual being able to accept the violation and its effects and being subsequently able to forgive the perpetrator.

Distinct interrelations between the structure and process of forgiveness were found. The structural components of forgiveness appear to be the direct result of the transformations that the

individual undergoes during the forgiveness process. For example, non-vengeance and non-bitterness is facilitated by the ability to understand the political dimension of the violation.

It can thus be argued that the aims of the study have been achieved to a large extent. In addition to the stated aims, several other interesting aspects emerged from the study. One of these was the fact that there seems to be significant differences between victims and survivors in terms of the process and structure of forgiveness. These differences appear to relate to the fact that victims were uncertain of the identity of perpetrators as well as the circumstances surrounding the violation because they were not personally involved in the violation. Despite this, however, they were able to forgive. This seems to suggest that forgiveness does not have to be directed towards a person, but that it can also be directed against an institution, which facilitated the violation. It also allows for the possibility of not being held hostage by the perpetrator of the violation or the effects of the violation because one will be in a position to grant forgiveness even if the identity of the perpetrator is unknown. This further implies that forgiveness is not conditional on the acceptance of responsibility and an apology from the perpetrator. The forgiver can, therefore, grant forgiveness in the absence of the perpetrator. All this reinforces the distinction between forgiveness and reconciliation with forgiveness being the victim or survivor's response to a violation whereas reconciliation is the response of either victim or survivor and the perpetrator of the violation. Another interesting aspect that emerged was the role that politics and the TRC played in enabling the participants to transcend the violation.

The study is unique in a number of ways. Past research has focussed on interpersonal forgiveness where the forgiver and the forgiven have known each other before the act that requires forgiveness. In these cases, the nature of the acts has also not been extremely severe. Forgiveness, in situations where there was no relationship between the forgiver and the forgiven

prior to the act and where the act was of a severe nature. has rarely been investigated in South Africa. The study of forgiveness has also been neglected by mainstream Psychology because of the dominance of the scientific method and the incompatibility of forgiveness with this method. This study is unique because it attempts to address some of the shortcomings that have been listed above. It therefore seeks to contribute towards filling the voids that characterizes scientific scholarship on forgiveness. It focuses on forgiveness following gross human rights violations by means of a method, which has the ability to adequately explore the content, meaning and process of forgiveness.

3. Reflections on the difficult nature of doing this type of research

Doing research is rarely problem-free. The researcher will inevitably encounter problems during the research process. In this section, some of the problems that were encountered are reflected on.

3.1. Data collection

Data collection provided the researcher with a number of challenges. In accordance with the paradigmatic assumptions of the study, a complete, original record of the interview situation is regarded as a positivist fantasy. Thus, although attempts were made to have as little interruptions as possible, it was inevitable that interruptions would take place. This made the transcription of interviews, at times difficult, as these interruptions were captured on the tape-recorder. In cases such as these, the researcher then had to rely on his recollection of the interview situation and attempted to reconstruct the participants' verbatim responses to the interview questions. In addition to this, it should be noted that in the process of recording the interview, it is impossible

for the tape-recorder to capture subtleties such as body language. In both these instances, valuable data could have possibly been lost. In order to minimize this, the researcher made notes about the interview situation during and after each interview.

2.1. Data analysis

As was mentioned earlier, data analysis was achieved by means of a process of progressive interpretation. It is by no means argued that the interpretations match the participants' intentions or meanings. Rather, the researcher's interpretation was guided by his fore-structure. This meant that certain interview material that was regarded as 'important' in answering the research questions, was selected, while other 'irrelevant' interview material were discarded. In addition to this, it has to be mentioned that any single interpretation excludes other interpretations. The results, therefore, reflects one reality, which is essentially based on the dialectical interaction between the researcher's fore-structure and the interpretive data. Based on all these, it has to be stressed that no objectivity or truth claims are made. The relatively small sample (N=5) also meant that the generalizability powers of the results would be affected. What is, however, argued for, is usefulness and relevance of the interpretation. One that will be able to make a contribution to much needed debate and scientific scholarship on forgiveness following gross human rights violations.

4. Recommendations

Although there exist a body of descriptive literature on the benefits of forgiveness, the act of forgiveness as a therapeutic intervention remains largely unexplored. Research also needs to be done on forgiveness in relation to religion, e.g. to what extent if any does one's religious

convictions motivate one to forgive. In our multicultural society, another interesting aspect to explore might be the role of culture and race in motivating forgiveness and how the meaning of forgiveness differs across cultures. Reasons for these differences can also be explored. In addition to this, personality and gender as it relates to forgiveness needs examination. Results of this study revealed that there are significant similarities and differences between the forgiveness structure as well as process of survivors and victims of gross human rights violations. The reasons for these differences and similarities can be further explored. As one of the participants was unable to sustain the forgiveness she expressed at the TRC, an area to explore might be factors that impede the forgiveness process. Given the nature of the violations for which forgiveness was granted, another area that warrants investigation is the limitations of forgiveness. For example, when is it harmful to forgive?

In conclusion, four of the participants, despite the hurt and pain that they endured as a result of their human rights being violated, were able to reach a point where they could forgive those responsible for the violations and sustain that forgiveness. This suggests that forgiveness has a transcendental quality to it. It is, therefore, hoped that this study will inspire others to further explore forgiveness in politics as it relates to the South African situation. This field, with its many facets and far reaching implications for intrapersonal, interpersonal and especially political relationships demands our rigorous attention. Scholars need to study the topic, write, teach and inform South Africans on this urgent matter. This transcendental quality might just be the solution for those who are attempting to heal the wounds of the past.

APPENDIX 1

EXAMPLE OF THE EXTRACTION OF THE CENTRAL PARTS OF THE INTERVIEW TEXT

This appendix contains an example of the results of Phase 3, Stage 1, Step 2 of the interpretive analysis of the individual interview with Participant One.

I woke up in the hospital. The pains, the pain that was there, untold pains.

You know something that is just out of this world.

I thought I was in hell. I cried and cried and cried for water and I could hear the nurses say 'no, don't give him the water.

When I was in hospital, people didn't want to tell me that my girlfriend had died.

She was hit at the back of the head. Her head was split into two.

My leg, I've got broken bones and nerves were severed.

So I don't think I will ever heal fully.

You know, it depends on how you were involved in the struggle.

In the ANC, we were taught about discipline.

To work for the ANC in the underground, it was a call.

I am answering the question from a political perspective.

The ANC came to power, you know.

And it was trying to institutionalize this process.

So I said to myself, the reason why I have to go to the TRC, this is a call, you know.

Another thing that made me believe more, is that I saw some of my comrades that were there during the revolution, you know.

They are also part of the process.

If maybe TRC was formed and some the people who were not in the revolution were not part and parcel of the whole thing, I wouldn't have gone, for sure.

Absolutely. This is what made me to be strong.

I was very excited to be part of this.

My perspective is that TRC is the right channel to expose the deeds that were done, whether they were wrong or right, by the previous regime.

Another thing is that, we will always differ on the TRC.

Our operations were different.

Politically I was involved.

Some people, they were caught in the crossfire, you understand, when these things happened. So I won't judge their perception about the TRC.

To me, the TRC is the best channel to deal with the past. It is helping us to reconcile and not do what other governments in Africa have done.

The question of revenge. You know, if you look in Africa, what is happening, it is war, because of grudges.

I was involved with other comrades here, but I have not seen a comrade taking a gun, and say, maybe, go into the white area.

And say 'because I was ill-treated, I'm going to shoot some white people.

Absolutely.

I'm feeling great.

But you know, to forgive and to reconcile is easy.

But there is only one thing that the TRC will never do. It is what happened to me.

You know that they cannot take away.

Whenever somebody interviews me about this, at times, I feel like crying, because I still remember that day.

But what the TRC did do, is to make me feel comfortable, not to resort to such things as revenge and all that.

But I can forgive, but I cannot forget.

No, but that is in the hands of the TRC and I don't want to go and dig what is happening.

They will come to me when they have finished their investigation.

And I will comply with whatever they say.

To forgive is not an easy thing.

It takes time, especially with what happened to me, you understand.

Because I am suppose to have resentment to those who have done this to me, and of course, my fiancé, she died in that process you know.

I was very angry, but because of the TRC, it has made me to be comfortable, not to be comfortable, materially, by giving me money and such things.

But in the sense that I am able to live what happened and carry on with my life.

At least, the TRC has promised us some compensation..

I'm always going to the doctor and I'm also thinking about my children.

So this compensation will help me, you know, also in forgiving and reconciling.

I am talking about myself now.

I am in the process of forgiving, you understand.

But if those people are brought to me, they can give me the reason as to why they have done this and then I would have inside information as to what happened and why it happened.

I can also answer them, and then I can reconcile.

I cannot reconcile in a vacuum.

You understand. It would then also be easier for me to forgive, you understand, because then I know who specifically to forgive.

I had a lot of anger and resentment.

No.

It is because of the TRC, you understand.

It is them that made me feel comfortable with myself and allowed me to deal with the negative ideas I had.

The first time I went to the TRC to give a statement, I was well accepted.

Those were the early stages of breaking what was inside me.

Those people who were taking statement, they were very involved.

Also, when the investigation started, I saw that there is something taking place here.

That made me to move and not be stagnant in my resentment.

I was satisfied that the people who have done this were going to be identified.

They are going to be seen by everyone.

I was happy that I was going to see who these people are, not that I was going to do this and that, but that I was going to see them.

I was relieved. They will be able to tell me what I have done wrong, you understand, for them to do such a thing to me.

Maybe I cannot give enough explanation, because at times, you know, because you are a human being, sometimes I feel like crying, sometimes, I feel happy, you understand.

So I cannot explain exactly what is happening.

But the bottom line is that I have forgiven, but I want to see those people so that I can say, A-B-C and D. So it is not easy.

Well I wish that the TRC would become involve in other disputes, you understand.

The way that they have handled this, because, I must say that this is one of the most sensitive...how can I put it, situation.

The TRC is trying to say don't revenge.

Let us deal with what has happened in a right manner.

It is important to address these problems.

It is the only way for forgiveness and reconciliation. It would unite the country.

Otherwise, the whole country would be in turmoil.

Let me tell you, if there was no institution like the TRC, there would have been a civil war.

After I came from the TRC, a lot of my comrades asked me whether I trust this TRC.

I'm telling you, they started to observe and see that this TRC is a good thing.

And they have come to their senses.

They have also forgiven and want reconciliation to take place.

The TRC have forced them to admit that it is the only way for peace.

They have realized that the TRC is very balanced, so it makes it difficult for them to complain about the process.

Even in Kwazulu-Natal, the leaders of Inkatha said no people should go to the TRC, but now they are going in numbers.

So that shows that something is happening.

APPENDIX 2

EXAMPLE OF A BRAINSTORMING SESSION OF EXTRACTED DATA

This appendix contains an example of the results of Phase 3, Stage1, Step 3 of the interpretive analysis of the in-depth personal interview with Participant One. The sentences in bold are the verbatim answers of the participant to the interview questions

SO I DON'T THINK I WILL EVER HEAL FULLY.

SO: for this reason

I DON'T THINK: I do not believe or I am not of the opinion

EVER: eventually

HEAL: restore one's health

FULLY: completely

AND IT WAS TRYING TO INSTITUTIONALIZE THIS PROCESS.

TRYING: attempting, to be committed towards something-

INSTITUTIONALIZE: to make established, official, to adopt as standard, to sanction as norm

THIS PROCESS: this method of forgiveness and reconciliation

SO I SAID TO MYSELF, THE REASON WHY I HAVE TO GO TO THE TRC, THIS IS A CALL, YOU KNOW.

SAID TO MY SELF: convince oneself

REASON WHY: the justification for doing something

HAVE TO GO: have to join the liberation movement and take part in underground activities

THIS IS A CALL: it is destiny

ANOTHER THING THAT MADE ME BELIEVE MORE, IS THAT I SAW SOME OF MY COMRADES THAT WERE THERE DURING THE REVOLUTION, YOU KNOW.

ANOTHER THING: something additional

MADE ME: convinced me

BELIEVE: to be of the opinion, lack of doubt

MORE: increasingly

I SAW: witnessed

SOME OF MY COMERADES: some of those who were also involved

THAT WERE THERE: who were involved

THE REVOLUTION: the fight against oppression

SOME PEOPLE, THEY WERE CAUGHT IN THE CROSSFIRE, YOU UNDERSTAND, WHEN THESE THINGS HAPPENED.

SOME PEOPLE: some individuals

THEY WERE CAUGHT IN THE CROSSFIRE: they were innocent and did not actively take part in the struggle, their rights were violated

WHEN THESE THINGS HAPPENED: when there were clashes between the police and the freedom fighters

THE QUESTION OF REVENGE, YOU KNOW, IF YOU LOOK IN AFRICA, WHAT IS HAPPENING, IT IS WAR, BECAUSE OF GRUDGES.

THE QUESTION: the matter, issue

OF REVENGE: retaliation, reprisal

IF YOU LOOK: if you consider

IN AFRICA: on the continent

WHAT IS HAPPENING: what has been going on

IT IS WAR: the existence of conflict

BECAUSE OF: the reason

GRUDGES: resentment, hostility, bitterness, animosity, hatred

BUT YOU KNOW, TO FORGIVE AND TO RECONCILE IS EASY.

BUT: on the other hand

TO FORGIVE: to have no ill-feelings against those who caused harm

TO RECONCILE: to live in harmony

IS EASY: not difficult

BUT THERE IS ONLY ONE THING THAT THE TRC WILL NEVER DO. IT IS WHAT HAPPENED TO ME.

THERE IS ONLY ONE THING: the existence of a single thing

WILL NEVER DO: inability to accomplish

WHAT HAPPENED TO ME: the suffering endured by self

YOU KNOW THAT THEY CANNOT TAKE AWAY.

THEY: the TRC

CANNOT: unable

TAKE AWAY: to remove

WHENEVER SOMEBODY INTERVIEWS ME ABOUT THIS, AT TIMES, I FEEL LIKE CRYING, BECAUSE I STILL REMEMBER THAT DAY.

WHENEVER SOMEBODY: anybody

INTERVIEWS ME: speaks to me

ABOUT THIS: what happened to self

AT TIMES: sometimes, not always

I FEEL: have the need

LIKE CRYING: emotional expression of pain, sadness

BECAUSE: the reason

I STILL: something remains

REMEMBER: to be in one's memory, to be aware of something
THAT DAY: the day when the attack occurred

**BUT WHAT THE TRC DID DO, IS TO MAKE ME FEEL COMFORTABLE,
NOT TO RESORT TO SUCH THINGS AS REVENGE AND ALL THAT.**

WHAT: something specific

TRC DID DO IS: the TRC did manage to accomplish

TO MAKE ME FEEL COMFORTABLE: to allow me to deal with what has happened

NOT TO RESORT; not to do something else, or to decide to do something destructive

TO THINGS AS REVENGE: issues such as retaliation

AND ALL THAT: and other related things

BUT I CAN FORGIVE, BUT I CANNOT FORGET.

CAN FORGIVE: to have the ability to pardon

BUT: on the other hand

I CANNOT FORGET: inability to erase what happened from memory

**NO, BUT THAT IS IN THE HANDS OF THE TRC AND I DON'T WANT TO GO
AND DIG WHAT IS HAPPENING.**

NO: those who were responsible for the attack was not identified

THAT: the question of amnesty

IS IN THE HANDS OF THE TRC: it is the work or responsibility of the TRC

I DON'T WANT TO GO AND DIG WHAT IS HAPPENING: unwilling to interfere
with the work of the TRC

AND I WILL COMPLY WITH WHATEVER THEY SAY.

I WILL COMPLY: willing to agree, or live with

WITH WHATEVER THEY SAY: the finding of the TRC, whatever they are

TO FORGIVE IS NOT AN EASY THING.

TO FORGIVE: to pardon, to excuse

IS NOT AN EASY THING: it is a difficult thing to do

**IT TAKES TIME, ESPECIALLY WITH WHAT HAPPENED TO ME, YOU
UNDERSTAND.**

IT: forgiveness

TAKES TIME: duration

ESPECIALLY: particularly

WITH WHAT HAPPENED TO ME: related to severity of violation

**BECAUSE I AM SUPPOSE TO HAVE RESENTMENT TO THOSE WHO HAVE
DONE THIS TO ME, AND OF COURSE, MY FIANCEE, SHE DIED IN THAT
PROCESS YOU KNOW.**

I AM SUPPOSE: I am expected, I have the right

TO HAVE RESENTMENT: bitterness, anger

TO THOSE: those who we fought against

WHO HAVE DONE THIS TO ME: who were responsible for violating my rights
AND OF COURSE: naturally, without a doubt
MY FIANCE: lover, girlfriend
SHE DIED: she was killed
IN THAT PROCESS: as a result of the attack

I WAS VERY ANGRY, BUT BECAUSE OF THE TRC, IT HAS MADE ME TO BE COMFORTABLE, NOT TO BE COMFORTABLE, MATERIALLY, BY GIVING ME MONEY AND SUCH THINGS.

I WAS: past state
VERY ANGRY: extremely upset
BUT BECAUSE OF THE TRC: because of what the TRC is doing
IT: the TRC
MADE ME TO BE: had an affect on self, caused change in self
COMFORTABLE: at ease, untroubled. enabled me to live with what has happened
NOT TO BE COMFORTABLE: not to have it easy
MATERIALLY: material things

BUT IN THE SENSE THAT I AM ABLE TO LIVE WHAT HAPPENED AND CARRY ON WITH MY LIFE.

BUT IN THE SENSE: in the way or manner
I AM ABLE: possess the ability
TO LIVE: to exist
WHAT HAPPENED: the effects of the attack
CARRY ON: continue

AT LEAST, THE TRC HAS PROMISED US SOME COMPENSATION.

AT LEAST; something to be grateful about
HAS PROMISED, pledged, assured
US: the victims whose human rights were violated
SOME COMPENSATION: a form of reparation

I'M ALWAYS GOING TO THE DOCTOR AND I'M ALSO THINKING ABOUT MY CHILDREN.

I'M ALWAYS: frequently
GOING TO THE DOCTOR: visiting the doctor
THINKING: to be concerned
ABOUT MY CHILDREN: those self is responsible for taking care of

SO THIS COMPENSATION WILL HELP ME, YOU KNOW, ALSO IN FORGIVING AND RECONCILING.

SO THIS COMPENSATION: the expected reparation
WILL HELP ME: will assist
ALSO IN FORGIVING: in pardoning, excusing
AND RECONCILING: live with those responsible for violation

BUT IF THOSE PEOPLE ARE BROUGHT TO ME, THEY CAN GIVE ME THE REASON AS TO WHY THEY HAVE DONE THIS AND THEN I WOULD HAVE INSIDE INFORMATION AS TO WHAT HAPPENED AND WHY IT HAPPENED.

BUT: in the event

IF THOSE PEOPLE: those responsible for the attack

ARE BROUGHT TO ME: if a meeting is arranged

CAN: will be able

GIVE ME THE REASON: explain

AS TO WHY THEY HAVE DONE THIS: the reason for their action

AND THEN: after explaining

I WOULD HAVE: be in possession

INSIDE INFORMATION: first hand knowledge

AS TO WHAT HAPPENED: details of what happened

AND WHY IT HAPPENED: the reason why it happened

I CAN ALSO ANSWER THEM, AND THEN I CAN RECONCILE.

I CAN: to have the ability, to have the willingness

ALSO: in return

ANSWER THEM: provide an explanation

AND THEN: following this explaining and understanding

I CAN RECONCILE: be in a position to live with those responsible

I CANNOT RECONCILE IN A VACUUM.

I CANNOT: inability to do something

IN A VACUUM: does not come from one person alone, requires agreement between two parties

IT WOULD THEN ALSO BE EASIER FOR ME TO FORGIVE, YOU UNDERSTAND, BECAUSE THEN I KNOW WHO SPECIFICALLY TO FORGIVE.

IT WOULD THEN: under certain circumstances

ALSO BE EASIER: be in a better position

FOR ME: personal ability

TO FORGIVE: to pardon

BECAUSE: the reason

THEN I KNOW: under certain circumstances will have the knowledge

WHO SPECIFICALLY TO FORGIVE: which individuals should be pardoned

I HAD A LOT OF ANGER AND RESENTMENT.

I HAD: in the past

A LOT OF ANGER: a significant amount of animosity, hostility

RESENTMENT: bitterness

APPENDIX 3

EXAMPLE OF THE PROCESS OF DEVELOPING THEMES WITH RELEVANCE TO THE STRUCTURE OF FORGIVENESS

This appendix contains an example of the results of Phase 3, Stage 1, Step 4 of the interpretive analysis of the individual interview with Participant One.

THEMES RELATED TO THE CONCEPT STRUCTURE OF FORGIVENESS

<u>THEMES</u>	<u>INDICATORS</u>
PRESENCE OF EFFECTS AFTER FORGIVENESS	... No, I will never heal fully ... the bullet in my back can't come out ... but there is only one thing that the TRC will never do, it is what happened to me ... you know that they cannot take away
FORGIVENESS IS NOT FORGETTING	...at times, I feel like crying, because I still remember that day. ... but you know, to forgive and to reconcile is easy ... but I can forgive, but I cannot forget.
NON VENGEFULNESS	... not to resort to such things as revenge and all that ... not that I was going to do this and that
FACE -TO-FACE CONTACT	... I cannot reconcile in a vacuum ... that I was going to see them. ... but I want to see those people so that I can say, A-B-C and D
TRUTH	... it would then also be easier for me to forgive, you understand, because then I know who specifically to forgive. ... I was satisfied that the people who have done this were going to be identified
COMMITMENT TOWARDS FORGIVING	...but the bottomline is that I have forgiven

APPENDIX 4

EXAMPLE OF THE PROCESS OF ESTABLISHING RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN STRUCTURE THEMES

This appendix contains an example of the results of Phase 3, Stage 1, Step 5 of the interpretive analysis of the individual interview with Participant One.

IDENTIFICATION OF INTER-RELATIONS BETWEEN THEMES

Words printed in capitals are categories identified in the previous steps of the interview process

- THE PRESENCE OF THE EFFECTS OF THE VIOLATION AFTER FORGIVENESS has been granted underlies the fact that FORGIVENESS IS NOT FORGETTING.
- This however does not deter from the fact that there is a COMMITMENT TOWARDS FORGIVING.
- FACE -TO-FACE CONTACT facilitates the emergence of the TRUTH.
- NON-VENGEFULNESS is facilitated by one's COMMITMENT TOWARDS FORGIVENESS.
- NON-VENGEFULNESS AND COMMITMENT TOWARDS FORGIVENESS does not imply that the search for the TRUTH has been abandoned

APPENDIX 5

EXAMPLE OF THE PROCESS OF DEVELOPING THEMES WITH RELEVANCE TO THE PROCESS OF FORGIVENESS

This appendix contains an example of the results of Phase 3, Stage 2, Step 4 of the interpretive analysis of the individual interview with Participant One.

THEMES RELATED TO THE CONCEPT PROCESS OF FORGIVENESS

<u>THEMES</u>	<u>INDICATORS</u>
FORGIVENESS AS UNFOLDING	... to forgive is not an easy thing.. ... it takes time, especially with what happened to me, you understand
LIGITIMATE ANGER	... because I am suppose to have resentment to those who have done this to me, and of course, my fiancé, she died in that process you know. ... I was very angry
ACCEPTANCE	... it has made me to be comfortable, not to be comfortable, materially, by giving me money and such things ... but in the sense that I am able to live what happened and carry on with my life.
PAIN	... I felt pain ... sometimes I feel like crying
UNDERSTANDING	... but if those people are brought to me, they can give me the reason as to why they have done this and then I would have inside information as to what happened and why it happened ... they will be able to tell me what I have done wrong, you understand, for them to do such a thing to me.
COMPENSATION	... at least, the TRC has promised us some compensation

... So this compensation will help me, you know, also in forgiving and reconciling

EXPLAINING

... I can also answer them, and then I can forgive and reconcile

NEGATIVE EMOTIONS

... I had a lot of anger and resentment
... I was angry.

FEARS

... I'm also thinking about my children

APPENDIX 6

EXAMPLE OF FURTHER EXAMINATION OF THE PROCESS OF FORGIVENESS USING A READING GUIDE CONSISTING OF FOUR QUESTIONS

This appendix contains an example of the results of Phase 3, Stage 2, Step 5 of the interpretive analysis of the individual interview with Participant One.

What motivates one to forgive?

CATEGORIES

INDICATORS

CREDIBILITY OF TRC

... Another thing that made me believe more, is that I saw some of my comrades that were there during the revolution, you know

... They are also part of the process

.... If maybe TRC was formed and some the people who were not in the revolution were not part and parcel of the whole thing, I wouldn't have gone, for sure.

... but what the TRC did do, is to make me feel comfortable,

... it is them that made me feel comfortable with myself and allowed me to deal with the negative ideas I had

... also, when the investigation started, I saw that there is something taking place here

... that made me to move and not be stagnant in my resentment.

... the reason why I have to go to the TRC, this is a call

... well I wish that the TRC would become involve in other disputes, you understand

... the way that they have handled this, because, I must say that this is one of the most sensitive...how can I put it, situation

... the TRC is trying to say don't revenge

... let us deal with what has happened in a right manner

... it is important to address that problems

... it is the only way for forgiveness and reconciliation

... it would unite the country

... otherwise, the whole country would be in turmoil

... let me tell you, if there was no institution like the TRC, there would have been a civil war

POLITICAL INSIGHT

... You know, it depends on how you were involved in the struggle

... In the ANC, we were taught about discipline

... To work for the ANC in the underground, it was a call. So when the TRC was formed, when they said that people, whose rights were violated, they should come and testify

... The question of revenge. You know, if you look in Africa, what is happening, it is war, because of grudges

What assists this process?

CATEGORIES

SUPPORT NETWORK

INDICATORS

... the first time I went to the TRC to give a statement, I was well accepted

... those people who were taking statement, they were very involved.

What causes change?

CATEGORIES

THE TRC AS CATALYST FOR CHANGE

INDICATORS

... To me, the TRC is the best channel to deal with the past.

... It is helping us to reconcile and not do what other governments in Africa have done

... After I came from the TRC, a lot of my comrades asked me whether I trust this TRC

... I'm telling you, they started to observe and see that this TRC is a good thing

... and they have come to their senses

... they have also forgiven and want reconciliation to take place

... The TRC have forced them to admit that it is the only way for peace

... those were the early stages of breaking what was inside me

What causes pain?

CATEGORIES

THE EFFECTS OF THE ATTACK

INDICATORS

... people didn't want to tell me that my girlfriend had died.

... so it was a painful thing, you know.

... I'm always going to the doctor

APPENDIX 7
EXAMPLE OF THE PROCESS OF ESTABLISHING
RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN PROCESS THEMES

This appendix contains an example of the results of Phase 3, Stage 2, Step 6 of the interpretive analysis of the individual interview with Participant One.

IDENTIFICATION OF INTER-RELATIONS BETWEEN PROCESS
THEMES

Words printed in capitals are categories identified in the previous steps of the interview process

- COMMITMENT TOWARDS FORGIVING is enhanced by the CREDIBILITY OF THE TRC
- ACCEPTANCE is contingent upon UNDERSTANDING and EXPLAINING
- SUPPORT NETWORK reduces the EFFECTS OF THE ATTACK
- PAIN as well as THE EFFECTS OF THE VIOLATION results in LEGITIMATE ANGER
- SUPPORT NETWORK facilitates ACCEPTANCE and UNDERSTANDING
- THE CREDIBILITY OF THE TRC is enhanced by the POLITICAL INSIGHT of the individual
- COMPENSATION provides relief for FEARS that are experienced

APPENDIX 8

FIRST READING GUIDE CONSISTING OF FOUR QUESTIONS USED IN THE INTERPRETIVE ANALYTICAL PROCESS (PHASE 3, STAGE 3, STEP 2 - FURTHER EXAMINATION OF THE PROCESS OF FORGIVENESS)

Question 1. What motivates one to forgive?

Question 2. What assists the process?

Question 3. What causes change?

Question 4. What causes pain?

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